

Moose off to play on the Island



Mariah wants a wedding every year

RCMP veteran to receive sentence

THEFT A 14-year veteran of the RCMP will be sentenced Feb. 19 for stealing from the Government of Canada.

Blair Francis Gorman, 42, who worked out of the Pictou office, pleaded guilty to the theft charge in New Glasgow provincial court Wednesday morning.

A charge of breaching the public trust by using an RCMP vehicle credit card to fill plastic cans with gasoline was dropped.

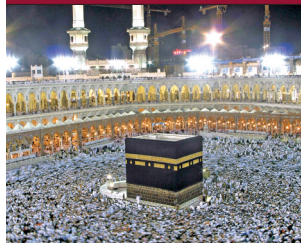
A third charge, for fraudulently using an RCMP vehicle credit card, was also dropped. Gorman is to be tried on a charge of shoplifting from Wal-Mart Jan. 8.

METRO HALIFAX

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Honouring the Feast of Sacrifice

Comments pg 14

Iggy will be a patient leader

Style pg 27

Glam up your New Year's Eve

Canada pg 8

UNICEF ranks Canada last



Interim Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff speaks during a news conference in Ottawa yesterday. The opposition Liberals named Ignatieff, a formidable campaigner they hope will reverse the once-mighty party's decline, as their new leader yesterday.

Ignatieff crowned

Liberal caucus makes decision official

The Hallmark moment in Liberal caucus came when Michael Ignatieff and Bob Rae embraced.

It was a deliberate signal from the pair of Toronto Liberal MPs that their political rivalry — alive and well just days ago — had been set aside as caucus crowned Ignatieff the interim, and almost certainly permanent, leader.

"It was really tough to keep a dry eye. It was a moment," said Liberal MP Martha Hall Findlay.

Rae and New Brunswick Liberal MP Dominic LeBlanc, another leadership contender who dropped out and threw his support to Ignatieff, made the motion in caucus to

"It was really tough to keep a dry eye. It was a moment."

Liberal MP Martha Hall Findlay speaking about Bob Rae and Michael Ignatieff embracing

have him become the leader.

Liberal Party of Canada president Doug Ferguson said there was a sense of relief in the room as the leadership race game to a quick and quiet end.

Ferguson also said it is likely there will be a movement to help former Liberal leader Stéphane Dion retire his outstanding debts — a suggestion Dion loyalist and Liberal MP Bryon Wilfert had recently voiced to someone in the Ignatieff

camp.

"I think they'll be supporters going to step forward to raise money for him," Ferguson said. "I think that's the least we can do for Mr. Dion for his courage and dedication over the last few years."

As he left caucus, a relieved-looking Dion told reporters he was "very proud to leave (the leadership) in a way to give Canadians a great leader in Michael Ignatieff."

Dion said Ignatieff

would now express the party's view on a coalition but added he strongly supports it. Dion smiled wryly when asked if he has any advice for Ignatieff.

"He's a big boy," he said, adding he would happy to counsel him if he asks.

There was recognition of the fact that both Rae and LeBlanc withdrew from the race gracefully this week, without any complaints about the fast-track contest that reduced their own chances of winning.

"With what went on and what people said when they withdrew from the race ... the caucus appreciated it," said Liberal MP Paul Szabo.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Fatal crashes hours apart claim 2 lives

RACHEL BOOMER
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POLICE CHASE Two people were killed in fatal crashes on Nova Scotia roads yesterday morning.

At about 3 a.m., the driver of a stolen Dodge Neon died after a two-minute chase with police along Route 245 near Antigonish.

Police spotted the stolen car while transporting a prisoner; a second police vehicle chased the Neon for a short while, then stopped the chase for fear of endangering someone. The Neon disappeared. When police found the car, about four kilometers away from where the chase stopped, it had crashed and the driver was dead.

RCMP still haven't identified the driver and are looking for the public's help. He was between 5-foot-3 and 5-foot-5, 20 to 25 years old, of medium build, with a light beard and short dark hair.

Three hours later, Arnold Clifford Sabean, of Digby Co. died when two cars collided head-on along Highway 101 near Windsor. RCMP say Sabean's car crossed the centre line and collided with another.

RCMP are still investigating what caused Sabean's car to cross the centre line and crash.

Injuries

- Four other people were taken to the Hants Community Hospital after Sabean's crash with non-life-threatening injuries, and part of the highway between Exits 4 and 5 was closed for hours.

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Crashed Ice qualifiers tomorrow at Metro Centre

Feeling like a daredevil? Red Bull's Crashed Ice event is holding qualifiers tomorrow at 6:30 p.m. at the Metro Centre. The event is a combination of downhill skiing, hockey and bordercross. The finals will be in Quebec City. **METRO HALIFAX**

Local



Backlog in youth court

It's taking too long to handle youth-court cases in Halifax because there's only one courtroom, Halifax youth court Judge Pam Williams told the CBC. Williams said it takes six months, rather than the three-month target, for offenders to get trial dates, and it can take two months for a youth to be sentenced after pleading guilty.

METRO HALIFAX

Credit card fraud uses stolen data

SCAM Police are warning of a fraud scam going around.

Det. Const. Dana Drover said there's been one report of this scam so far in the HRM.

People apply online to be secret shoppers. They're sent credit cards and told to take out a funds withdrawal from the card and wire transfer the cash to a third party.

"What it ends up being is the credit card itself has stolen credit-card data on it," he said.

"It's something different and new."

Typically, these types of scams would involve a counterfeit cheque or a counterfeit money order the victim would take to a bank, Drover said. They would withdraw the funds and wire it to the scammers.

But in this case, the first victim would find out when he receives his credit-card statement. The second victim (the online applicant) might not know he was using a stolen credit card.

"They may not (know) because the credit-card information is not their own, it's from a third party who's an innocent victim," Drover said.

"So the person being sent the card and asked to do the transaction wouldn't necessarily suffer a financial loss because they're using the credit-card information from another victim."

The one case to be brought to police attention in the HRM was caught before there was a financial loss.

"The person who received the card thought it was suspicious and we were able to determine what was behind it," he said.

JENNIFER TAPLIN/METRO HALIFAX

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What's online today.

Read CBS chief challenges Jay Leno to a duel at

metronews.ca/entertainment.

Read Barack Obama plans to deliver a speech in a Muslim capital at **metronews.ca/world.**



Undergrad numbers down

Graduate, international student rates have increased: Report

JENNIFER TAPLIN
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There's a smidgeon more room in university classrooms these days.

Undergrad enrolment in Nova Scotia is down six per cent this year, the biggest decline in the Maritimes, according to the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission.

Saint Mary's University has four per cent fewer undergrads this year.

"There's been a decline in the last two years after a couple years of substantial growth. That's the demographic trend kicking in and the economy because up until now, there were more jobs available," said Chuck Bridges with SMU.

Although it's always a concern when enrolment goes down, Bridges said the university budgeted for this, so it won't have an immediate impact.

Dalhousie University squeezed out an increase of just under one per cent this year. Spokesman Charles Crosby said it's because they've looked elsewhere for students.

"We have a different mix of students than the other universities in the area. We



A student walks through the Dalhousie campus yesterday. University enrolment is down at most Maritime universities, however the number of students attending Dalhousie is up slightly.

have about 50 per cent of our students from the region and 50 per cent from outside the region, which has helped us stabilize when local trends have been on the downward track," Crosby said.

"I think to be a truly competitive institution, a healthy diverse mix of students is necessary."

SMU is an international school, but their intention is

to take care of Nova Scotian students first, said Bridges.

"I think we've always (marketed to international students), but I think that over this year and the years to come there will be a more focused attempt on attracting students to come to Saint Mary's."

Another trend noted by the commission is an increase of Maritime students leaving their home pro-

vinces to study. What's interesting, Bridges said, is that many of them are coming back home to Saint Mary's to study after a year or two in another institution.

Undergrad enrolment may be heading for the basement, but enrolment for grads is increasing.

Both SMU and Dal are reporting higher numbers of graduate students this year.

Findings

- Enrolment in all three Maritime provinces has declined since the peak in 2004-05. Total enrolment in the Maritime provinces was 69,135, down 5.5 per cent.
- In Nova Scotia, it was 41,676, down six per cent. New Brunswick had enrolment of 23,538, down 5.1 per cent. In Prince Edward Island, it was 3,921, down 1.8 per cent.
- The number of graduate students increased 4.2 per cent in 2007-08 over the previous year, and 9.9 per cent since 2003-04. In 2007-08, they represented 12.9 per cent of students in Maritime universities.
- The number of students originally from the Maritime provinces attending Maritime universities has declined 7.8 per cent, from 54,620 in 2003-04 to 50,367 in 2007-08.
- The number of international students has increased 10.7 per cent since 2003-04. They now make up 9.7 per cent of enrolment.

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Auto dealers warn of possible scam

SCAM Rural auto dealers are warning the public about a possible phone scam in which people are asked to provide credit-card information to purchase an extended automobile warranty.

Customers who express an interest in the warranty are asked to provide their credit-card information to be billed a \$368 down payment on a new warranty.

Similar phone calls in the Halifax area were discussed at a meeting of the Nova Scotia Automobile Dealers Association two weeks ago. The calls are believed to be happening provincewide. The RCMP is aware of the possible scam.

METRO HALIFAX

Lotteries

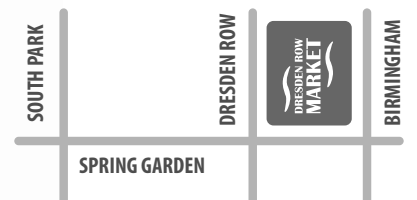
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4 local

NDP wants province to end dollar drinks before the holidays
Yesterday, Halifax Citadel MLA Leonard Preyra said Dalhousie University Health Services doctors also support the proposed ban. **METRO HALIFAX**



Gordon Beanlands gets a haircut and a beard trim from Jonathan Stickney at the Demone Barber Shop on Agricola Street yesterday. The barber shop has been in operation since 1928.

Old-fashioned barber shop caters to everyone

KAMIA CREELMAN
for Metro Halifax

"We're the only ones who still use straight razors to shave necks."

Jonathan Stickney

You can still find a straight razor, a steady hand and a lathered, trusting neck at the Demone Barber Shop, the oldest barbershop in Halifax.

"We're the only ones who still use straight razors to shave necks," said Jonathan Stickney, who bought the 90-year-old Agricola Street shop last July.

"It's safer than in those old cowboy movies," Stickney joked.

Stickney may not sharpen his razor against a leather strap while the local sheriff tips his Stetson and hangs up his gun belt, but the shop has kept its

fun, historical character since it opened its doors in 1928. The wood panelling and floors are original, and the swivel, reclining chairs are circa 1900. A working pedestal sink still sits in the centre of the room.

There is even a 100-year-old male customer who has been coming for a cut since 1928, Stickney said. With the military close by, Stickney says there's still a market for the old-fashioned, 1920s flattop — "perfectly flat on top, perfectly square."

But lots of customers want up-to-date styles, and

the shop specializes in fades — the popular cut that's shorter on the sides, longer on top.

"You know, that one from the Fast and Furious movies ... the one the girls like," Stickney said.

Stickney and his partner Steve Muise want to help out their younger clientele in other ways, too. They are looking to sponsor a local sports team. "Maybe hockey or baseball," Stickney said.

The shop was started by Isaac Demone, and it stayed in his family until 1997.

Blitzen guides road home

JENNIFER TAPLIN
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Before you get blitzed, remember the not-so-famous reindeer of all: Blitzen.

Halifax Regional Police and RCMP are launching Operation Blitzen over the holiday season.

It will mean more checkpoints and education campaigns around impaired driving with alcohol or drugs.

"Operation Blitzen is a high visibility, heightened enforcement traffic campaign," said Insp. Dar-

rell Beaton, with the RCMP in a statement released yesterday.

"(It's) aimed at ensuring our roads and highways are safe for everyone to travel during the holiday season.

"Through education and enforcement, we are striving to reduce fatal and serious-injury collisions caused by impaired driving."

The first Operation Blitzen checkpoint is slated for today on Highway 107 in Westphal from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

It will be in partnership with Operation Red Nose and MADD Canada.

Developers want consultations on arts project

MOTION Two area developers want Yarmouth town council to wait for 90 days on a motion to grant support for a new arts centre on Parade Street. In an e-mail to council, Michael Taveres and Neil Hisgen say they believe council needs to put out a request for proposals on the project and then have an independent consulting firm review the submissions and make a recommendation to council. Taveres and Hisgen say they have a plan that would not only meet all the requirements of what Th'YARC is looking for in a new facility, but also do so near the downtown in a fashion that would help that area. **METRO HALIFAX**

Operation Blitzen

- Checkstops will run until Jan. 2.

ShareYourViews

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Stay safe this winter

The provincial Emergency Management Office is reminding homeowners and drivers to keep an emergency kit in their homes and cars. **METRO HALIFAX**

local 5



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Leslee Nicholson, 48, commutes 435 kilometres to work in Halifax – each way – from her home in Victoria Mines, Cape Breton Co. Nicholson's been doing the killer commute three times a week since last June, when she got her "dream job," to allow her daughter to finish junior high in Whitney Pier.

Canada's longest commuter drives five hours each way

RACHEL BOOMER
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Surely, the country's longest commute is in Toronto. Right?

Actually, no.

Cape Bretoner Leslee Nicholson drives five hours each way to work, three days a week, to get to her "dream job" in downtown Halifax.

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, Nicholson gets up at 2 a.m. at her Victoria Mines, Cape Breton Co. home.

She's on the road by 3. Five hours and 435 kilometres later, she gets to work for 8:30 a.m.

She spends \$150 a week on gas, and doesn't get

"People think I'm crazy."

Leslee Nicholson

home till 9 or 9:30 p.m.

"People think I'm crazy," Nicholson laughs.

Most people move to Nova Scotia to get away from commutes far shorter than Nicholson's, but she does this one willingly.

When she got a new job with the provincial Labour and Workforce Development Department last June, her daughter, Jessie, 14, wanted to finish her Grade 9 year in Whitney Pier. So Nicholson's doing the killer commute till the school year ends.

Two days a week, she

works from the department's Sydney office, just a seven-minute hop away.

Yesterday, Goodyear Canada named Nicholson Canada's Longest Commuter. A survey commissioned by the company suggests most Canadians travel a more reasonable 63 minutes each day. One-quarter of us say we'd take a pay cut in return for a shorter commute.

But Nicholson says it's not so bad, because she's so much happier in her job now: "I have more energy on the weekends."

She's a bit afraid of the winter months, though, and she's got a message for drivers: Slow down.

"Every day, I see at least one car in the ditch."

Province's largest pension fund out 1.3B

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Nova Scotia's largest public pension has lost hundreds of millions of dollars in recent months and now faces more than a billion-dollar shortfall.

Taxpayers could be on the hook for half of that.

The Public Service Superannuation Plan only has enough money to cover 72 per cent of what's on the books. That leaves a shortfall of \$1.3 billion. That's on top of the Teachers' Pension Plan shortfall of \$1.1 billion.

"I think people should be interested and concerned, but not panicked," said Steven Wolff, CEO of the Nova Scotia Pension Agency.

Pensions across Canada have taken a hit because of the collapse of the stock market. Wolff said people's

"I think people should be interested and concerned, but not panicked."

Steven Wolff, CEO Nova Scotia Pension Agency

pensions are safe in the short and even medium term, but they need to focus on the long-term health of the fund.

"We're focused really on two major priorities at the moment. One is risk management, that really means no surprises, avoiding major, major mistakes," he said.

"The other is preserving liquidity, which means essentially investing in assets that can readily be converted to cash if needed."

In reality, the current debt is even worse than the \$2.4-billion figure. Those numbers come from a snapshot taken at the end of September and stocks have

fallen further since then.

The government is on the hook for half of the shortfall. While it doesn't need to be made up immediately, options for making it up include reducing benefits to employees or increasing payment costs.

"The longer we take to make decisions, the worse the health of the plan becomes, and the more the cost passes through to taxpayers on the operating statement," said deputy finance minister Vicki Harnish.

Premier Rodney MacDonald stressed that there is no need to panic. He said steps will be taken, but wouldn't say yet what they were.

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Looking for a locally made gift this Christmas? Junior Achievement is holding trade fairs this Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Young entrepreneurs will sell everything from T-shirts to jewelry at Park Lane Mall. **METRO HALIFAX**

Health-centre plans delayed

CONSTRUCTION It will be spring at the earliest before Shannex Health Care begins construction of its 36-bed long-term care facility in Amherst.

The company is using an 11-acre site on Willow Street across from Amherst Regional High School as the location of its multimillion-dollar long-term care facility.

ty and retirement community. Along with a 36-bed long-term care facility, the company also hopes to build a three-storey, 70-unit assisted-living facility. Construction was originally set to begin last summer, but was delayed. Despite this, the project should be completed by December 2009 or January 2010. **METRO HALIFAX**

100 new jobs added in Halifax

Naval engineering firm Fleetway plans to expand operations

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Up to 100 new jobs will be created in Nova Scotia over five years as a naval engineering company expands

its Halifax operation.

The province through Nova Scotia Business Inc. announced it would support the expansion of Fleetway Inc. The Canadian naval engineering and technical services company

will be given a payroll rebate of up to \$1,547,000.

The five-year rebate is a performance-based incentive tied to hiring targets.

Part of the Irving Group, Fleetway is headquartered in Halifax and does engineering and support in the Canadian defence, shipbuilding, oil and gas and other sectors.

The new jobs will include engineers, technical staff and management positions.

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Extradition order illegal, lawyer says

KAMIA CREELMAN
for Metro Halifax



APPEAL Alleged pedophile Ernest Fenwick MacIntosh appealed his extradition from India yesterday, saying Canada brought him back illegally. MacIntosh, now in his mid-sixties, was extradited last July to face 43 sexual offence charges dating from the 1970s.

MacIntosh did not appear at the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal hearing yesterday.

His lawyer, Brian Casey, argued that the Crown is trying to profit from India's different legal system.

He said government officials deliberately sent evidence to India that would never be accepted in Canada, arguing they did not disclose that one of the boys who was allegedly molested identified a different man, and another boy did not formally swear his statement.

Yet another, Casey said, refused to meet with police.

The extradition warrant India prepared is a problem, too, Casey said. It's unclear that the 43 offences MacIntosh is charged with are the offences he was extradited for.

Crown lawyer Kenneth Fiske argued there was no government corruption and said the evidence sent to India would stand up in Canadian courts.

"This is a novel case," said Justice Thomas Cromwell, one of three judges on the panel hearing the case.

The judges reserved their decision yesterday. They are expected to make a decision in the coming weeks.

"This is a novel case."
Justice Thomas Cromwell

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Event planners conference coming

The 2009 Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners conference will be held in Halifax. Chair and veteran event planner Rita Plaskett says the conference will focus on local food, local talent and the local experience. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

local 7

Cause to celebrate

City events mark Human Rights Day

EDANA ROBITAILLE
for Metro Halifax



People came together all over the city yesterday to celebrate of the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Eleven-year-old Logan MacGilivray from Bedford got an award for his documentary film Listen to the Children, about children in Sierra Leone. He helped raise money to build seven schools in that country.

The other award recipient was reachAbility, an organization that works with people with disabilities.

"We think of disabilities as being 'special' too much," said Tova Sherman, the organization's president, "Special is not always a good thing. We're just trying to equalize the playing field."

"(Rights abuses are) worldwide. There are cases in Canada, so it even affects us."

Student
Abbie Betts

The event was also used to try to raise awareness about pending issues. Cheryl Maloney, a lecturer on Mi'kmaq studies at Cape Breton University, said she is disappointed that Canada didn't sign the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

At CompuCollege in Halifax, public relations students teamed up with Amnesty International for a letter-writing event.

Student Abbie Betts chose to help because she believes in making a difference for victims of rights

abuse.

"It's something that stood out because it's worldwide. There are cases in Canada, so it even affects us," Betts said, referring to a land-claims case in British Columbia. She said some people actually wrote 16 letters, one for each of Amnesty's cases.



Hisham Hamdan, 11, drums his way through the Common Room at the Dartmouth Sportsplex as other YMCA youth drummers entertain the crowd at an International Human Rights Day event yesterday.

Ferry cuts fuel levy

TRANSPORTATION Marine Atlantic is slashing its fuel surcharge, to nine per cent from 25.4 per cent. President and CEO Wayne Follett said with the drop in the price of oil, the Crown corporation will pay less for fuel, so it's passing the savings along.

If you've already got a

reservation on the ferry between Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia, Marine Atlantic says it'll credit you with the lesser charge.

The ferry transports over 416,000 passengers between the two provinces each year.

METRO HALIFAX

Credit issue won't stop wind project

POWER While its "dancing partner" may be on economic life support, the company responsible for getting the turbines turning on the Nuttby wind project still says things will ultimately proceed.

"That is a certainty," said Charles Demond, president of Atlantic Wind Power Corp., the company responsible for getting the 45-megawatt Nuttby Mountain project on stream. "Our dancing partner on the financial side of things ... now is on life support," he said, regarding EarthFirst, the Alberta developer that last month filed for creditor protection.

But Demond remains confident that EarthFirst will either get its financial house in order or else other investors will come along. This will enable Nova Scotia Power Corp. to fulfil its obligation to reduce dependency on non-renewable energy sources.

METRO HALIFAX

Native groups on EnCana radar

OIL AND GAS Energy company EnCana will pump hundreds of thousands of dollars into a fund to help attract native people into the offshore gas and oil industry.

The Calgary-based company announced recently it would be entering into a partnership with the Native Council of Nova Scotia to create the EnCana-Native Council Opportunities Fund (ENCOF).

EnCana will provide the fund with \$200,000 a year for five years while leaving administration of the funds to the native council.

The fund will be used to help attract native people living off reserves to fields of work in, or associated with, the oil and gas sectors.

Funding will be available for training, recruitment, counselling and education.

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8

The Transportation Safety Board's final report into a 2007 hot-air balloon near Winnipeg urges new regulations for the commercial ballooning industry. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

TSB urges balloon regulations

Canada

Canada ranks last in child care: UNICEF

Canada ranks last in the first-ever comparison of child care services in 25 developed countries, according to the United Nations Children's Fund.

The report card, to be released today shows Canada failed on nine of 10 measures aimed at ensuring kids get the best start in life, including providing subsidized child care for 25 per cent of kids under age three and spending one per cent of GDP on early childhood services.

Canada's poor showing represents a lost opportunity for economic growth at a time of economic uncertainty, suggests the report by UNICEF's Innocenti Research Centre in Florence,

"Investing in early child care and education is a key strategy to respond to current economic challenges and to promote economic stimulus and recovery."

UNICEF Canada statement

Italy. Building a system of high-quality early-childhood care and education creates jobs and allows parents to work and pay taxes.

"Investing in early child care and education is a key strategy to respond to current economic challenges and to promote economic stimulus and recovery," UNICEF Canada said in a statement.

Ottawa must act by introducing "measurable standards, guidelines and ap-

propriate funding for child care and solutions by July 2009," said UNICEF Canada added.

The report, entitled The Child Care Transition, was sparked by new scientific understanding about the importance of early childhood at a time when an increasing majority of children in the world's richest countries are spending a large part of their day in child care, UNICEF says.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto Debit donations



The Salvation Army, hoping to boost donations, is offering a modern alternative to stuffing crumpled bills in a kettle — donating on the street with one swipe of a debit or credit card. Two wireless debit machines are being rotated through downtown Toronto locations, as a test this year. The organization said if the test proves to be successful, the program will be expanded.

Tories launch swift attack on Ignatieff

POLITICS The Conservatives immediately set their sights on Michael Ignatieff, pegging him as an unelected leader with no mandate to head a coalition government.

Although Prime Minister Stephen Harper has stated he is "willing" to co-operate with the new Liberal leader, Conservatives emerging from yesterday's caucus meeting drove home the message that the selection of Ignatieff was undemocratic and said the Tories would not down their partisan tools while there is the threat of a coalition.

"The basic substance of the debate doesn't change," said Heritage Minister James Moore.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

"The debate doesn't change."

Tory MP James Moore

News in brief

ONTARIO After years of horror stories concerning unregulated cosmetic-surgery clinics, new inspection powers will be given to the provincial

medical watchdog and other regulated health colleges. Health Minister David Caplan proposed legislation yesterday empowering regulatory

bodies like the College of Physicians and Surgeons to inspect clinics where high-risk procedures are performed.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Auto plans must go public: McGuinty

Canada's struggling automakers must come clean on plans to cut jobs if they hope to win support for the \$6 billion in aid they're seeking, says Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty. General Motors, Ford and Chrysler submitted plans last Friday, but have yet to publicly reveal plans for their Ontario factories. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

'She's not really my girlfriend'

Fem-bot sparks fame, questions for Ontario man

A Brampton, Ont., man who found himself an instant Internet celebrity yesterday after his "robot girlfriend" was featured on websites of two British tabloids, is both happy and embarrassed by the attention.

"She's not really my girlfriend," said Trung Le at his parents' home last night. "Aiko's a robot who can do a lot of things, and hopefully more soon."

Stories in The Daily Mail and The Sun called Aiko, the five-foot tall robot with a hourglass figure, shiny hair, delicate Asian features and silicon breasts, Trung's girlfriend.

"I have friends — I don't need to create friends," said Trung sheepishly. The stories suggested he may have made Aiko because he was too busy to make friends or have a girlfriend.

Trung, 33, who made his first robot when he was eight, says Aiko is the result of years of planning, calculation and hard work.

Aiko, which means love child in Japanese, can speak about 13,000 sentences in Japanese and English, do algebra, trigonometry and geometry, pick up and identify medicine and tell the weather. She can move her hands and nod her head.

Trung is now trying to get her to make tea/coffee and do simple household chores.

He started working on as-



Trung Le, right, with his fem-bot named Aiko at his Brampton, Ont., home. Aiko is a voice-recognition robot with very little motion.

"I have friends — I don't need to create friends." Trung Le

sembling her in August last year and she was ready two months later. Well, almost. Her hair — real from Japan — came a bit later.

She cost him about \$25,000, leaving him penniless and forcing a move back to his parents' home.

Aiko, who spent her childhood as a head attached to a bag stuffed with circuitry, has been attacked, harassed and even assaulted, Trung said.

Trung has taken her out

to a north Brampton park three times. "Most people have been very curious about her and want to know what all she can do," he said. Many women, he said, have been fascinated with her and have touched her breasts to get a feel of what silicon is like.

But one elderly woman yelled at her and threw rocks. She told Trung that he was "trying to be God and it wasn't right."

Trung is unfazed by the reaction. "If people think she's pre-programmed, I invite them to her next public appearance or even to my home to test her," he said. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Harper looking to fill vacant Senate seats?

POLITICS Stephen Harper plans to fill every empty Senate seat by the end of the year to kill any chance of an NDP-Liberal coalition government filling the vacancies next year, a source told the Toronto Star last night.

The prime minister plans a wave of appointments in the coming week to tilt the balance more in favour of the Conservatives in the Liberal-dominated upper chamber, a government source said last night.

Fighting a Tory-stacked Senate

- The move is sure to spark howls of protest from opposition parties, arguing that Harper, who prorogued the

House rather than be defeated by a united opposition, has no right to make such appointments during this time.

"The government has the intention of naming senators by a government that is legitimately elected by the people," the official said, taking a swipe at the coalition that is threatening to topple the Conservatives.

Gov. Gen. Michaëlle Jean

placed no restrictions on Harper's ability to govern when she granted his request last week to discontinue parliamentary proceedings. That leaves him free to stack the Senate with his own nominees.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Comfort and Joy.

News in brief

ENVIRONMENT Earth Hour 2009 was launched this week at the United Nations climate change negotiations in Poland, and local organizers said they hope next year's lights-out event on March 28 will motivate the Canadian government to cut back on greenhouse emissions by signing on to the next climate-change accord.

AFGHANISTAN The ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, in which the 100th Canadian soldier died Friday, has not hurt the military's efforts to find recruits for front-line combat. In fact, it appears to have helped, as several recruitment offices across the country are about to set records for enrolment. But those same offices are reporting difficulty recruiting doctors and non-combat roles.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Driving high larger problem than driving drunk in B.C., survey finds

DUI B.C. drivers are more likely to be under the influence of drugs than of alcohol, a new survey suggested yesterday.

Preliminary findings from the 2008 British Columbia Roadside Survey found that 10.4 per cent of people driving at night showed evidence of drug use. By comparison, 8.1 per cent of drivers had consumed alcohol.

"We've spent the past 25 to 30 years dealing almost exclusively with alcohol and driving," said Doug Beirness, senior research and policy analyst at The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA).

"We've had some pretty good success with that regard. We haven't solved the problem, but we made

Daily problem

- The survey found that while alcohol-impaired driving was stronger on weekend nights, drug use was constant throughout the week.

gains. Now we're finding that there is this other problem, lurking behind the alcohol problem that has to do with drug use. That's disturbing."

The data, released yesterday by the CCSA, is part of a larger report that will be released in 2009. The survey interviewed 1,533 drivers in June in Vancouver, Abbotsford, and Saanich.

JEFF HODSON/METRO CANADA

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Doctors in St. Louis said they successfully transplanted a full ovary from a volunteer, allowing her infertile twin sister to give birth to a healthy baby girl on Nov. 11. It is the first time an entire ovary has been transplanted and resulted in a live birth, the researchers said. **REUTERS**

World



Sugar can be addictive

A study of rats offers scientific proof for what many dieters already know: Sugar can be addictive. Bingeing on sugar can act on the brain in ways very similar to drug abuse, a Princeton University researcher said yesterday. The binges produced behavioural and even neurochemical changes in rats that resembled the changes, such as withdrawal symptoms, produced when animals or people take substances of abuse. **REUTERS**

Obama urges Illinois governor to resign

U.S. president-elect Barack Obama called on Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich to resign yesterday, after he was charged with trying to sell Obama's Senate seat and swap favours for money.

Obama spokesman Robert Gibbs said Blagojevich needed to step down because "under the current circumstances, it is difficult

for the governor to effectively do his job and serve the people of Illinois."

A movement arose in Obama's home state of Illinois to strip Blagojevich of the power to make the appointment he allegedly tried to barter, either by driving him from office through legal means or letting voters fill the Senate seat with a special election.

Obama, who takes office Jan. 20, resigned from the Senate after winning the Nov. 4 presidential vote.

Blagojevich showed no sign of stepping down after he was arrested at home before dawn Tuesday and then released on his own recognizance without having to post bail.

His office said Bob Greenlee, one of three

"Under the current circumstances, it is difficult for the governor to effectively do his job and serve the people of Illinois."

Obama spokesman Robert Gibbs

deputy governors serving in appointed positions, had resigned.

The governor and his chief of staff, John Harris, were charged in a federal

complaint with conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud and a second count of solicitation of bribery.

Prosecutors said Blagojevich was caught on tape

describing the Senate seat as something so valuable "you just don't give it away for nothing."

The federal charges allege Blagojevich tried to trade the Senate appointment for personal gain and force the Chicago Tribune into firing critical editorial writers by interfering in a deal involving the sale of Wrigley Field. **REUTERS**

6 million refugees trapped, UN says

CRISIS Some six million people around the globe are trapped in mainly poor countries as refugees, many facing deprivation that feeds crime and human trafficking, a senior United Nations official said yesterday.

The world body's High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, said there were at least 30 crisis areas around the world where people had been forced to flee into neighbouring states.

The six million figure does not include millions of Palestinians. Many of the refugees could not go home because their countries of origin were racked by civil wars or affected by gross human rights violations.

"Packed into overcrowded settlements, deprived of an income and with little to occupy their time, these refugee populations are afflicted by all kinds of social ills, including prostitution, rape, and violence," Guterres said. **REUTERS**

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Prince Harry Trading for charity



Britain's Prince Harry closes a 250 million-euro deal with broker Amanda Hartnell at the offices of city traders ICAP in London yesterday. Prince Harry was attending the 16th annual ICAP Charity Day, where all global revenues from ICAP trading are donated to 100 charities. **REUTERS**

Greece hit by fifth day of rioting

VIOLENCE Riot police clashed with demonstrators for a fifth day and a general strike paralyzed Greece yesterday, piling pressure on the beleaguered conservative government.

Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis announced financial support for businesses damaged in the riots that have gripped more than 10 Greek cities.

"Government murderers!" demonstrators shouted, furious at the shooting of a teenager by police on Saturday. The killing ignited unrest fuelled by simmering public anger at po-

Opposition appeal

Greece's socialist opposition leader George Papandreou yesterday appealed for restraint and an end to violence sparked by the police shooting

of a teenager. "I appeal to all to show responsibility, restraint and to end the violence that our country is experiencing these days," he said.

litical scandals, rising unemployment and poverty.

Karamanlis, clinging to a thin majority, pledged to safeguard people from violence, but did not say how. Government sources denied rumours emergency measures were being considered. No more protests are planned this week but

tension remains high.

Youths lobbed firebombs at police, who returned volleys of tear gas outside Athens polytechnic university, hours after clashes outside parliament following a union rally against economic and social policy.

"Participation in the

strike is total, the country has come to a standstill," said Stathis Anestis, spokesman for the GSEE union federation which called the 24-hour stoppage.

Foreign and domestic flights were grounded, banks and schools were shut, and hospitals ran on emergency services as hundreds of thousands of Greeks walked off the job.

Unions say privatizations, tax rises and pension reform have worsened conditions, especially for the one-fifth of Greeks who live below the poverty line. **REUTERS**

U.S. House approves \$14B in auto bailouts

ECONOMY The U.S. House approved a bill yesterday to lend up to \$14 billion US to the three struggling automakers: General Motors Corp., Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler LLC.

Introduced by Democrats, the bill is nearly identical to one pending in the Senate, where Republican

opposition was making its chances for passage look uncertain.

The bailout proposal would extend taxpayer-funded loans or lines of credit to the Big Three and create a federal government post of "car czar" to oversee the industry. **REUTERS**

News in brief

LAWUIT Peru has filed a lawsuit against Yale University to recover relics taken nearly a century ago from the ancient Incan capital of Machu Picchu, the American school said yesterday. Peru says Yale has more

than 40,000 pieces taken by U.S. explorer and Yale alumnus Hiram Bingham in 1911. Museums worldwide are facing demands by countries, including Greece and Egypt, to return ancient treasures. **REUTERS**

Diabetes, celiac share some genetic roots

Type-1 diabetes and celiac disease, also known as gluten intolerance, share at least some genetic roots, researchers reported yesterday. The findings may lead to new treatments for such autoimmune diseases, which are caused when the body's immune system mistakenly destroys healthy tissue. **REUTERS**

Pakistan arrests met with mistrust

India still skeptical about neighbour

Pakistan confirmed yesterday the arrest of two men named by India as planners of the militant attack on Mumbai, but a senior Indian official described Pakistani actions so far as "eyewash."

Two operations commanders with the Lashkar-e-Taiba jihadi group, Zakiur-Rehman Lakhvi and Zarrar Shah were being held, Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani told journalists in Multan city.

"They have been detained for investigation," he said, providing the first official confirmation since Lakhvi's arrest in a raid on a Lashkar camp in Pakistani Kashmir Sunday.

India has put the official death toll in the Mumbai attack at 179, and public anger with Pakistan is running high.

The United States has engaged in intensive diplomacy to stop tensions mount-

Arrest reports

While other media have reported up to 40 people had been arrested, Pakistani intelligence officials told Reuters

only around a dozen people have been detained, mostly in the raid on a camp outside Muzaffarabad.

ing between nuclear-armed India and Pakistan and keep Islamabad focused on fighting the Taliban and al-Qaida threat on its border with Afghanistan.

Pakistan military spokesman Maj.-Gen. Athar Abbas said an operation against banned militant organizations remained underway, and was being carried out in several places.

The prime minister said he had no up-to-date information on whether Maulana Masood Azhar, the leader of the Jaish-e-Mohammad militant group, was also detained, as some media have reported.

Pakistan has been advised

by the United States to take swift, transparent action to co-operate with India in the investigation into the slaughter in India's financial capital.

Islamabad, however, has said anyone arrested and accused of involvement in the Mumbai attack will be tried in Pakistan.

Skepticism abounds in India over the sincerity of Pakistan's actions because of alleged past ties between the Pakistani military's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency and groups like Lashkar and Jaish that had fought Indian rule in Kashmir.

REUTERS

Rich asked to help poor nations to deal with climate change

Rich nations will be asked to contribute \$1 billion US to a fund to help the poorest countries implement urgent projects to adapt to climate change, a top official said yesterday.

Boni Biagini, who runs the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) which was set up under UN auspices in 2001, said funds would be raised based on an evaluation of plans

from 38 of the world's poorest countries.

"They are pretty satisfied about this amount. They say \$2 billion would be better, but let's start with \$1 billion at least and of course scale up," she told Reuters on the sidelines of U.N. climate change talks in Poznan, Poland.

The LDCF was established under the United Nations Framework Con-

vention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and is managed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), a major international funder of environmental projects.

So far, rich countries have pledged only \$172 million to the fund, with Germany, Denmark, Britain and the Netherlands contributing the most.

REUTERS

Human rights **Protest for Tibetan independence**



Supporters of Tibet yell outside United Nations headquarters, voicing their support for Tibetan independence yesterday in New York City. The supporters marched across the city as part of International Human Rights Day.

Nanotech plans lacking: Report

The current U.S. plan for the emerging field of nanotechnology lacks vision, fails to assess risk and leaves the industry vulnerable to public mistrust, a report by the National Research Council found.

The report, released yesterday, found serious gaps in the government's current plan for determining if there are risks posed by nanomaterials. It called for an effective national plan for identifying and managing potential risks.

"The current plan ... does not present an overarching research strategy needed to gain public acceptance."
David Eaton

"The current plan catalogues nano-risk research across several federal agencies, but it does not present an overarching research strategy needed to gain pub-

lic acceptance and realize the promise of nanotechnology," committee chairman David Eaton, a public health expert at the University of Washington in Seattle, said in a statement.

Nanotechnology, the design and manipulation of materials thousands of times smaller than the width of a human hair, has been hailed as a way to make strong, lightweight materials, better cosmetics and even tastier food.

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Business

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Bimbo to buy Weston bread unit for \$2.38B

ACQUISITION Mexico's Bimbo is buying the U.S. bread-making unit of Canada's George Weston Ltd. for \$2.38 billion US, giving it a chunk of the eastern U.S. market with one of the biggest acquisitions in its history.

Shares of Bimbo dropped 3.4 per cent to 59 pesos, bucking a firmer Mexican market, after the bread-maker said yesterday it had an agreement to buy George Weston's Weston Foods Inc. unit and would use long-term credit to finance the acquisition.

Pending authorization from regulatory authorities, the deal is expected to

close in the first quarter of next year.

Bimbo is one of the world's top breadmakers and the new acquisition will complement its 2002 purchase of George Weston's bread baking operations in the western United States for \$610 million US.

Weston Foods Inc. had sales of nearly \$2.2 billion US in the 12 months ended on Oct. 4 and it will give Bimbo access to the Boboli, Brownberry, Entenmann's, Freihofer's, Stroehmann and Thomas' brands of breads, rolls, muffins and bagels.

REUTERS

Consumer rage builds as banks reluctantly lower interest rates

Consumers across Canada are starting to speak out against the big six banks and their reluctance to fully

match a big interest rate cut by the Bank of Canada.

Patrick Novak, a 32-year-old homeowner, started a Facebook group called "Pass on Rate Cuts, Canadian Banks" on Tuesday night, just hours after the chartered banks decided to lower their prime rates by only 50 basis points.

The central bank had cut its rate by 75 basis points.

"Why should we have to kick and scream for rates that we should be given right away?" said fellow group member Panagiotis (Pete) Korogonas of Calgary.

Consumers are also upset that banks are blunting the Bank of Canada's actions at a time when banks are tapping taxpayer-funded programs to bolster their lending capacity, through a mortgage-purchase program to \$75 billion and a backstop of more than \$200 billion in interbank loans at a lower interest rate.

Another rate cut?

- The Bank of Canada may be starting to consider U.S. Fed-like liquidity programs to stimulate the economy. The overnight lending target is heading closer to zero with another rate cut expected in January. **REUTERS**

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's spokesperson said Canada has "an open, competitive banking system" and the federal government "does not dictate business decisions" to the banks. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Business in brief

ACTIVISM ACE Aviation Holdings, which holds 75 per cent of Air Canada's shares, said one of its biggest shareholders, West Face Capital, have asked the company to convene a meeting to remove all directors and create a new board.

is calling it a violation of world trade rules. The interim rule is being challenged by Canada, which says the rules pose an unfair technical trade barrier that makes U.S. packers less willing to buy Canadian cattle and at lower prices.

REUTERS

MARKETS The U.S. is on track to finalize rules that require country-of-origin labels on meat sold in U.S. grocery stores, but Canada



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Fur industry A mild winter means mild sales



A woman tries on a fur coat at a fur fair in Moscow yesterday. Russia's fur industry is awash with chat about the crisis — the crisis of another mild winter cutting demand for the coats considered part of its heritage. This year total fur sales in Russia — mainly coats — will drop by half to around \$2.5 billion US.

Nortel planning for bankruptcy?

TELECOM Nortel Networks Corp shares fell 20 per cent yesterday after a Wall Street Journal report that North America's biggest telephone-equipment maker has sought legal advice on a bankruptcy protection scenario in the event that its restructuring plan fails.

Facing a slowdown in demand and tougher competition, Nortel has also been exploring potential assistance from the Canadian government, the newspaper reported.

A Nortel spokesman told Reuters "no bankruptcy filing is imminent," but added the company has engaged advisers to help it plot out its future. He declined to say whether any of those advisers were

bankruptcy experts.

Shares in the Toronto-based company fell 13 cents to 51 cents on the Toronto Stock Exchange and fell 12 cents US to 40 cents US in New York. In mid-2000, they were worth more than \$1,100 each, adjusted for a stock consolidation that took place in late 2006.

"Nortel is a company that has more debt than it has cash, is cash flow negative, and whose pension obligations are almost certainly rising in current capital markets," said Duncan Stewart, analyst at DSAM Consulting in Toronto.

"For them not to be talking with bankruptcy experts would be imprudent, foolish, unwise — pick a word."

REUTERS

THE DAILY BUSINESS BUZZ

Wind energy over 2,000 MW:

Canada has become the 12th country in the world to surpass 2,000 MW of installed wind energy capacity. Wind currently supplies about 1 per cent of Canada's electricity demand, with 85 wind farms representing approximately 2,246 MW of generating capacity producing enough energy to power 671,000 homes.

Scotia Mine scaling back:

Acadian Mining Corporation announced today that it is scaling back its operations at its Scotia Mine (zinc-lead) in Gays River because of continued deterioration of metal prices. Operations staff has been further reduced by 38, bringing the total mine staff down to 70.

Small biz wants spending cut:

The small business sector wants any deficit spending by governments to be only under strict conditions, according to a survey conducted by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. More than half of respondents say governments should plan for balanced budgets but allow deficits if the economy performs worse than expected.

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BEAUTY
at the Bay

Comment & Views

Comment

Patience Iggy's virtue

New Grit leader should pass on coalition and rebuild party

Home&Abroad

Andrew Cohen

Canada & world insight

Three years ago, Michael Ignatieff was a political neophyte. Amid much anticipation, he had returned home from Harvard after decades abroad as a journalist, author, professor and broadcaster. As expected, he ran for Parliament and won a seat.

When Paul Martin resigned, Ignatieff ran for the leadership. It was too early for someone who had barely unpacked his bags, and he surely knew it. His campaign foundered and failed.

But today, in one of those strange and wondrous reversals of fortune, Ignatieff finds himself leader of the Opposition. He could be

prime minister of Canada within two years, maybe tomorrow.

The man then and now are assuredly different. Ignatieff remains thoughtful, eloquent and telegenic, which helped make him an influential public intellectual in London and Boston.

Now, though, he has learned the bloodsport of politics, which is the critical difference. He has entered the arena. He has paid his dues. He is no longer a dilettante, an arriviste, a poseur.

Three years in politics isn't a lifetime of experience. But in the Age of the Amateur, it is certainly respectable, longer than

Pierre Trudeau or Brian Mulroney served before they became prime minister (though Trudeau had been justice minister).

What Ignatieff has now, which he didn't have then, is the credibility he earned in Parliament as deputy leader and party loyalist. Over the last three years, he learned to swallow his reservations about the fumbling Stéphane Dion, even as Dion was self-destructing. He knew to support Liberal candidates in ridings everywhere, knowing that one day they would support him.

He knew to wait his turn. He knew it would come.

Now what? First, he must avoid falling into a coalition — any coalition — with the New Democratic Party and

the Bloc Québécois. It would be unsustainable, unpredictable and, for the Liberals, unprofitable.

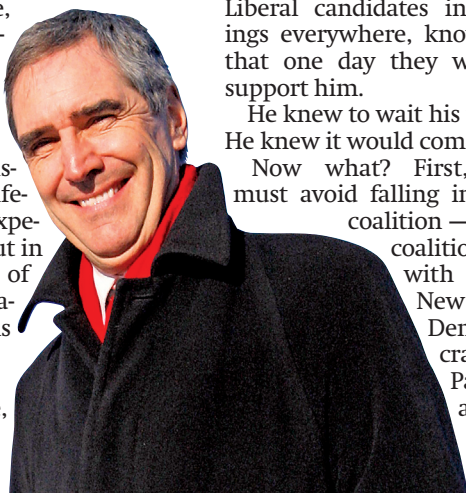
Second, he must renew the Liberal party. This means developing new ideas through a policy conference like the Liberals held at Kingston in 1960, positioning today's party in the centre-left, not the left, as a coalition would. It means finding ways to raise money, for example learning from Barack Obama's pioneering use of the Internet.

It means reorganizing the party structure. It means recruiting candidates, especially in Quebec and the West.

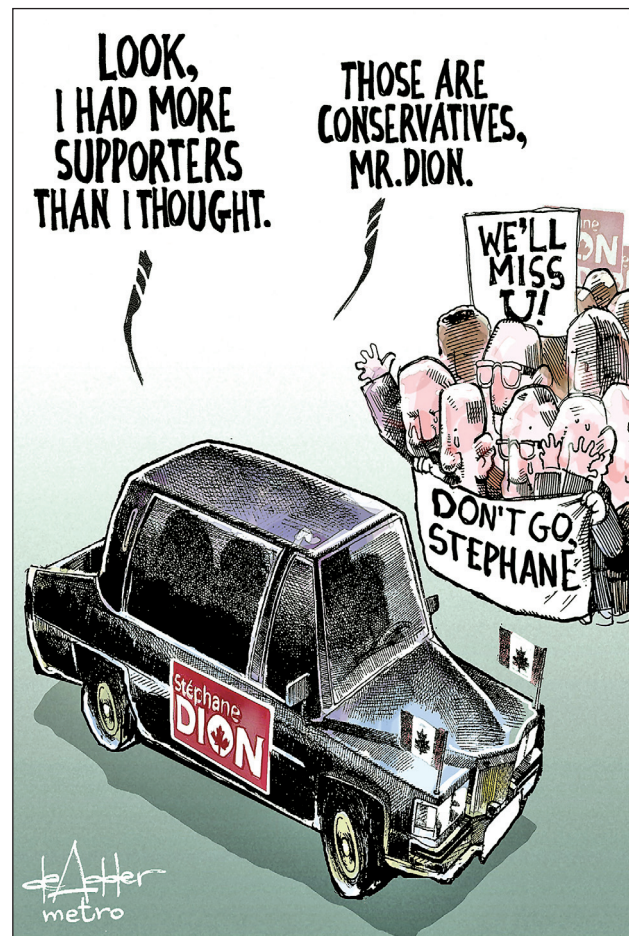
All this will take time. A wise leader will understand this. As Michael Ignatieff waited for the leadership, he will wait for power.

In politics, the foremost lesson is patience.

Andrew Cohen, a professor and journalist, is the author of *Extraordinary Canadians*: Lester B. Pearson.



REUTERS PHOTO



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Letters

High oil prices not needed for innovation

RE: letter "It's up to consumers to adapt to changing oil prices" (Dec. 8).

The fact oil prices are coming down after spiking so dramatically has not stopped innovation from occurring. The fall of oil and gas prices has been a welcome reward to many, including the farmers and ranchers of Canada, who have been beaten up by the peak in oil prices without receiving any reward in increased commodity prices. Also, when prices are high, it does not force oil companies to be innovative.

The threat of another upward spike is enough to scare most people into being more aware.

CLAY CREASY, BROWNSFIELD, ALTA

Contraception and consent

RE: "Teens need sex education" (Dec. 9).

Josey Vogels promotes the British contraception plan of offering contraception injections for 13-year-olds without parental consent.

Under this plan they can be prescribed medication

that alters their blood chemical and hormonal balance without parental consent.

What 13-year-old has the wisdom to consider the pros and cons of artificial hormone therapy? Side-effects range from mood changes to high blood pressure and blood clots.

Parents at the very least should have a say in their daughters' medical care.

JAI REID, PICKERING, ONT

The Queen deserves respect

Re: "Let's retire the Queen" (Dec. 10)

Mr. Sullivan should read up on some Canadian and world history before he calls the Queen of Canada a lawn ornament, or absurd.

How pathetic and shameful. He speaks of preserving our parliamentary democracy. Well, Britain and the monarchy were instrumental with that. Give respect where it is deserved. Maybe you, Mr. Sullivan, should be an ornament in Her Majesty's office to see how much she really does and how much she cares for all the citizens in her Commonwealth — even you.

STEVEN KRELLER, VANCOUVER

Views

State of Canadian economy rests on Obama

MoneyMatters

Charles Davies

Veteran Business Writer

When it comes to fixing the economy, we had all better hope our next leader gets it right. And when I say leader, I'm not talking about any of the delusional adolescents playing out the ongoing political farce in Ottawa. I mean Barack Obama, Canada's de facto economic caregiver-in-chief.

The hard reality for Canadians is that our well-being is reliant on the state of the U.S. economy. When your neighbour to the South takes three-quarters of your

exports and supplies two-thirds of your imports, you know you have a dependency issue. Add in the fact that Americans are the biggest foreign investors in Canada, and that we are their largest single supplier of oil and gas, and there's one truth that we can all hold to be self-evident. If Uncle Sam goes down for the count, we're going to get squashed.

He's already tottering. The U.S. lost more than half a million jobs in December, bringing the year's total to more than two million pink slips. Consumer spending is shriveling, as is business investment in inventory, plant and equipment. And let's not forget the sub-prime mortgage crisis and its potential to worsen as jobs continue to evaporate.

Although he doesn't offi-

cially become president until Jan. 20, Obama is already articulating elements of the economic rescue package he plans to take to Congress. Along with business and individual tax cuts, he's looking at raising unemployment compensation, adding to food stamps, providing federal aid to state and local governments and embarking on the largest public works program since the New Deal. Obama is not just promoting road and bridge building. He also wants to invest in things like broadband Internet access and smart electric grids, the kinds of infrastructure investments that would boost U.S. competitiveness once economic growth resumes.

The cost? Who knows, but it could easily surpass the \$700 billion US already allo-

cated to bail out the financial system, not to mention the \$14 billion US in government subsidized loans approved for U.S. automakers.

Will it work? Nobody knows that either, but it's at least clear that massive government aid is coming because, after all, the U.S. economy is too big to fail.

President Obama will very likely give Americans — and Canadians — a New Year's gift by presenting an aid package to Congress the very week of his inauguration. That would be before Canada's Parliament even reconvenes to consider Sideshow Jim Flaherty's next budget.

Charles Davies is a veteran business writer and editor who has worked for news organizations and publications including *Business Week*, *Canadian Business*, *Report On Business* magazine, *Reuters* and *Financial Post*.

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Defenders at penalty kicks will no longer be able to creep closer to the ball in the Argentine soccer league. Using an aerosol spray can to mark the required distance between the ball and opposition players during a penalty kick was approved by the Argentine Football Association yesterday. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Sports



Avery decision expected next week

TSN reported last night that the Dallas Stars will delay making a decision on Sean Avery's future with the team until his NHL suspension is completed. The former Cole Harbour resident is eligible to play again Dec. 16.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

SPORTS@METRONEWS.CA

Raptors beat Pacers for Triano's first win

NBA RESULT

Raptors 101 Pacers 88

Jason Kapono scored a sea-

son-high 25 points, leading the Toronto Raptors to a 101-88 victory over the Indiana Pacers at the Air Canada Centre last night.

Chris Bosh added 21 points and 10 rebounds for the Raptors, who snapped a five-game losing streak and gave interim coach Jay Triano his first victory after los-

ing his first three games. Jose Calderon recorded 11 points and 14 assists while surpassing Chauncey Billups' record for consecutive free throws by a Toronto

player.

Jermaine O'Neal, in his first game against the Pacers since being dealt to the Raptors for T.J. Ford and Rasho Nesterovic, among others,

had 10 points and nine boards for Toronto. Ford was held to four points, while Nesterovic went scoreless in 16 minutes of action. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Snowblower accident to sideline Sakic for 3 months

NHL Avalanche centre Joe Sakic will miss the next three months after undergoing surgery Tuesday night to repair three broken fingers and tendon damage, the team announced yesterday.



Sakic, already suffering from a herniated disc in his back, hurt the fingers in a snowblower accident.

"Joe's surgery was performed by a hand specialist," said Avalanche team doctor Andy Parker.

"The procedure went well and he's expected to make a full recovery."

Sakic missed several games in November with back problems and also missed a game on Nov. 24 with an infected tooth.

Sakic has two goals and 10 assists in 15 games this season.

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TheHockeyNews

Sam McCaig

thehockeynews.com

You can come up with a pretty convincing argument that says **Roberto Luongo, Martin Brodeur and Evgeni Nabokov** have been the best three goaltenders in the NHL for the past several seasons. **Mikko Kiprusoff and Henrik Lundqvist**, among others, might disagree, but for the sake of this column, bear with me.

Luongo has been the most dominant netminder in the league the past few years. Brodeur has won four of the past five Vezina Trophies. And Nabokov has been the backbone of the San Jose Sharks, annually one of the league's best teams (in the regular season, anyhow).

The three goalies share another commonality this season: A lengthy stint on the sidelines due to injury. Luongo has been out for three weeks and counting with a groin strain; Brodeur will miss at least three months after elbow surgery; and Nabokov missed much of November with a leg injury.

Interesting that three of the league's top goalies, all of whom have traditionally enjoyed good health, would all get hurt at the same time. Really, it's the first injury of consequence for each, at least since turning pro. As a result, we get to evaluate how their team has fared without them —

and how the club is likely to perform going forward.

It looked bad — real bad — in the 10 days after Brodeur's elbow injury in early November as the Devils lost five of six games without their all-world stopper.

But the Devils, who know a thing or two about team defence, reversed the losing trend with a five-game winning streak, and have gone 8-6-0 overall without Brodeur. Backup **Scott Clemmensen** has stepped up, helped by his team's penchant for suffocating defence, and the Devils remain a viable playoff contender.

In San Jose, the Sharks have been on a roll all season, and bare-

ly missed a beat when Nabokov missed three weeks in November. San Jose is loaded with talent at every position — even at backup goalie as it turns out, with **Brian Boucher** near the top of most goaltending categories.

Finally, Luongo. With reports suggesting he may return to the Canucks crease as soon as this weekend — and surely, within the next week or so — it looks like Vancouver has survived being without the one player everyone thought it could not afford to lose. The Canucks went 1-4-0 in the first five Luongo-less games, before a 2-0-1 streak improved their overall non-Roberto record to 3-4-1. No, that pace won't get you into the post-season — but it's good enough to keep Vancouver near the edge of the playoffs.

The Hockey News
thn.com

Pacman to miss Giants game

NFL Dallas Cowboys cornerback Adam (Pacman) Jones will miss Dallas' crucial NFC East battle with the New York Giants on Sunday due to a neck injury that could sideline him for the rest of the season.

Playing in his first game since being reinstated by NFL commissioner Roger Goodell for violating the NFL's player-conduct policy, Jones was injured after recovering a muffed punt against the Steelers on Sunday.

"He's out for this (Sunday's) game for sure and could possibly be out for the season," Cowboys coach Wade Phillips said yesterday. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Record deal for Sabathia: Report

CC Sabathia has agreed to join the New York Yankees for what is expected to be the richest contract signed by a pitcher, Major League Baseball's website said yesterday.

The report said the agreement came after the Yankees added another season and \$20 million US to the offer they made the player last month, bringing the package to \$160 million over seven years.

The deal, though, has still to be finalized and the team has yet to make an official announcement.

If it goes through it will eclipse the record six-year, \$137.5-million deal agreed between the New

York Mets and Johan Santana last year.

Yankees general manager Brian Cashman held talks with 2007 American League Cy Young Award winner Sabathia at this week's baseball winter meetings in Las Vegas.



Burnett next?

• According to ESPN, the Yankees have offered former Blue Jay A.J. Burnett a guaranteed five-year deal.

Cashman then travelled to the San Francisco area to meet the pitcher and his family on Tuesday night, according to media reports.

The 28-year-old free agent, a 6-foot-7 left-hander, split his 2008 season between the Cleveland Indians and Milwaukee Brewers, posting a combined 17-10 record and an earned-run average of 2.70.

Sabathia has a 117-73 record in eight major-league seasons. **REUTERS**

Tourney time features rivals

The Dalhousie Tigers' Rod Shoveller men's basketball tournament is set. The 18th annual Shoveller will be held Jan. 2-4 at Dalplex and will feature the Saint Mary's Huskies, St. Francis Xavier X-Men, Carleton Ravens, Laval Rouge et Or, Lakehead Thunderwolves and Bishop's Gaitsers. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

sports **17**

Conrad fights for national funding, spot in 2010

VANCOUVER
2010 Games

MATTHEW WUEST
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca

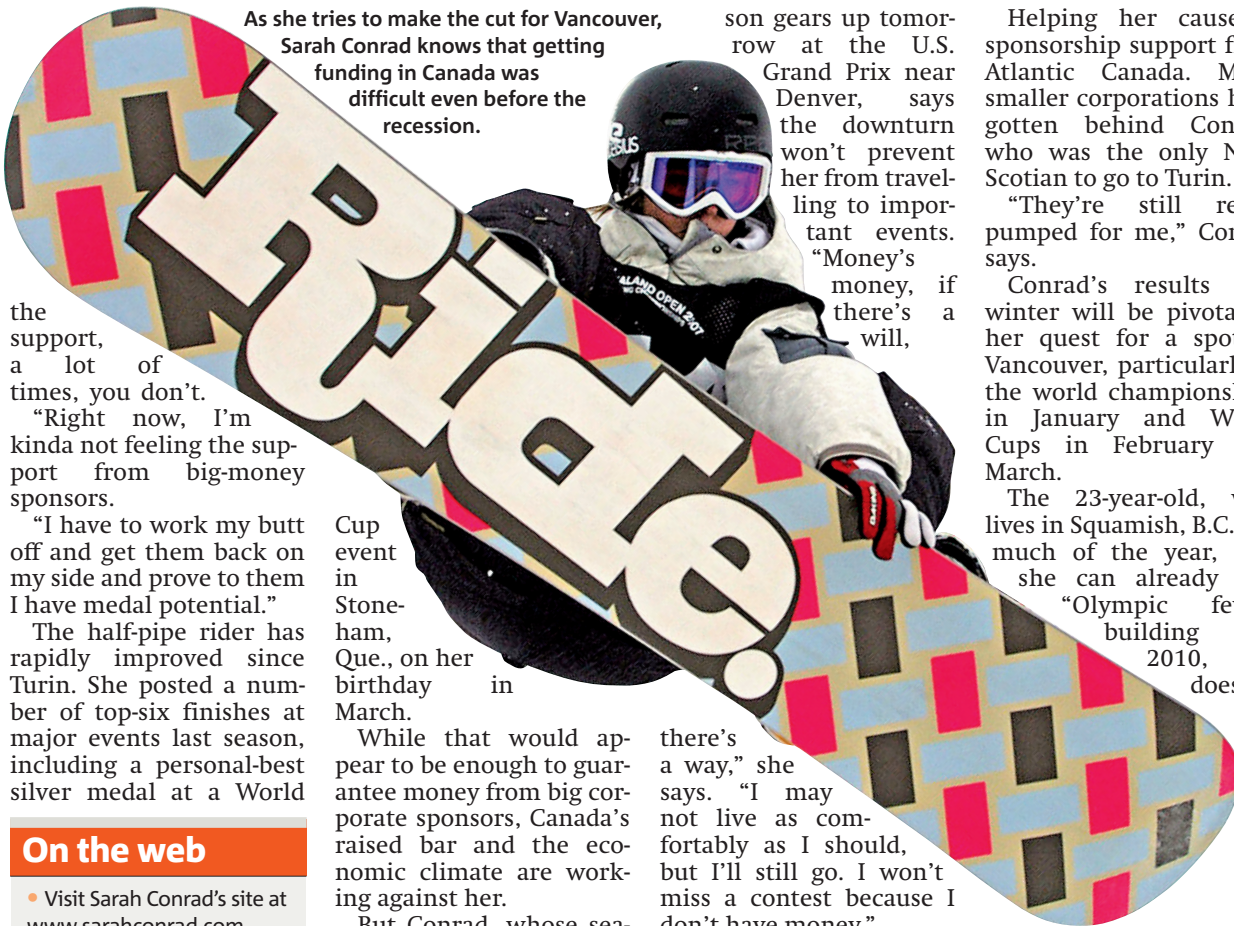
Sarah Conrad isn't sure where her national sponsor money went, but she's ready to fight to get it back.

The Dartmouth snowboarder, who unexpectedly went to the Winter Olympics in Turin in 2006, is encountering a few bumps in the road on her way to Vancouver 2010.

Turns out the Canadian Olympic Committee's Own The Podium slogan could leave Conrad out in the cold.

"Turin was kind of like, 'Yeah, sweet, you qualified, go and see how you can do,'" Conrad says. "Now, it's like, 'Go and medal or else you're not going at all.' The pressure's on."

"Sometimes, you feel



As she tries to make the cut for Vancouver, Sarah Conrad knows that getting funding in Canada was difficult even before the recession.

the support, a lot of times, you don't. "Right now, I'm kinda not feeling the support from big-money sponsors."

"I have to work my butt off and get them back on my side and prove to them I have medal potential."

The half-pipe rider has rapidly improved since Turin. She posted a number of top-six finishes at major events last season, including a personal-best silver medal at a World

Cup event in Stoneham, Que., on her birthday in March.

While that would appear to be enough to guarantee money from big corporate sponsors, Canada's raised bar and the economic climate are working against her.

But Conrad, whose sea-

son gears up tomorrow at the U.S. Grand Prix near Denver, says the downturn won't prevent her from traveling to important events. "Money's money, if there's a will,

there's a way," she says. "I may not live as comfortably as I should, but I'll still go. I won't miss a contest because I don't have money."

Helping her cause is sponsorship support from Atlantic Canada. Many smaller corporations have gotten behind Conrad, who was the only Nova Scotian to go to Turin.

"They're still really pumped for me," Conrad says.

Conrad's results this winter will be pivotal in her quest for a spot in Vancouver, particularly at the world championships in January and World Cups in February and March.

The 23-year-old, who lives in Squamish, B.C., for much of the year, says she can already feel "Olympic fever" building for 2010, and doesn't

"Sometimes, you feel the support, a lot of times, you don't. Right now, I'm kinda not feeling the support from big-money sponsors. I have to work my butt off and get them back on my side and prove to them I have medal potential."

Sarah Conrad

want to be left out.

She hopes consistent top-six finishes will get her there.

"I feel good about my riding; I feel strong," she says.

"The next year is going to be a trip, but this is what we do. This is our job. I'm going to do my best and see how things end up."

Tough loss for Mooseheads in Charlottetown

MATTHEW WUEST
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca

Nobody likes losing, but there's an extra sting when you think you played one of your best games of the season.

That was the case for the Halifax Mooseheads last night in Charlottetown as they lost 5-2 to the Prince Edward Island Rocket in Quebec Major Junior Hockey League play.

"You know what? I think that was one of our better games of the season," Mooseheads head coach Cam Russell said afterward.

"We played hard, killed a lot of penalties, and didn't allow a lot of scoring chances or a lot of shots."

Halifax took four straight penalties to start the game and P.E.I. grabbed a 3-0 lead in the second period with goals from Maxime Provencher, Olivier Morin and Simon Olsson.



Halifax Mooseheads goaltender Mathieu Corbeil looks behind him as the puck goes into the net in last night's 5-2 win loss to the P.E.I. Rocket in Charlottetown.

The Mooseheads narrowed the Rocket's lead to two goals twice, with goals from rookies Alexis Piette and Gabriel Desjardins, but that was as close as they got.

Halifax had a 29-20 shooting edge.

"We outplayed them and out-chanced them," Russell said.

So how'd the Moose lose? "Some untimely

turnovers," Russell said. "When they had their chances, they took advantage."

"They didn't have a lot, but they jumped on the opportunities they had."

Mooseheads rookie goalie Mathieu Corbeil filled in for veteran starter Mark Yetman, who is out with a mild groin injury. The 17-year-old turned aside just 15 of 20 shots.

Halifax (10-22-2) is chasing P.E.I. (12-16-6) in the standings, but has lost all three head-to-head matchups. P.E.I., which snapped a six-game losing streak, has opened up an eight-point lead in the Atlantic Division standings.

Blueliner Ben MacAskill took a high stick to the face and needed stitches. Matt Boland (shoulder) did not play.

Sports in brief

CIS The Saint Mary's Huskies will find out today if they will host the Vanier Cup from 2009 to 2011. The CIS will announce at 1 p.m. the winning bid for its championship football game. Saint Mary's, considered a frontrunner, submitted a three-year bid, while Laval, which won the

Vanier Cup last month, entered a two-year bid. But the CIS is reviewing a four-year offer from MRX Associates, the company founded by Bob Young, owner of the Hamilton Tiger Cats, and includes involvement of McMaster, Laurier and Western.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Metro Homes

EDITOR: DOUGLAS DUNLOP, DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Glass is turning up in some unexpected places

HomeScape

Sylvia Putz

metronews.ca/homescape

Windows, tabletops, and lovely coloured glass accessories have always captivated the eye. But now all the stops are being pulled out, and glass is showing up in places you mightn't think common sense and safety would allow.

"Glass when it is thick enough is remarkably strong," says Jim Bottrell, president of Adanac Glass, which deals in custom glass and mirror fabrication and installation. "Three-quarter-inch glass is as strong as marble," he assures me. "And when



In this South Beach Condominium's Delano model suite, a lavender back-painted glass panel provides a striking backdrop for the dining room.

you temper it, it is four times as strong."

The Adanac office and showroom, for instance, boasts an open contemporary glass staircase with glass tread. I didn't initially

feel completely confident walking up those steps, but when I did I found they're solid and gorgeous. The glass is thick and has a clear, anti-skid ceramic coating that gives it added strength and toughness.

Glass railings, particularly interior ones, are also appearing more and more. Etched or sandblasted patterns or designs add the luxurious look of customized art. Often these types of railing look more like solid glass, without much visible hardware.

Frameless shower enclosures and doors can be done in glass with a variety of textures, coatings or etchings. The results can be stunning.

Even bathroom doors can be done in glass — they're soundproof, and the patterns or coatings can obscure all but the vaguest outlines. Thank goodness for that, for there are some areas that just

don't do well as an open concept room.

Another eye-opener for me is the use of glass as a countertop. In addition to being strong, three-quarter-inch glass doesn't scratch easily and is heat resistant. Colours, patterns and other special effects can make the countertops unusual and beautiful.

And speaking of different types of finishes, painted glass is a particularly hot trend at the moment. Painted on the back and installed with the shiny side facing out, it gives a clean contemporary look.

And painted glass is also becoming very popular in kitchens as a backsplash. "There are no grout lines to clean," notes Bottrell — a quality, I might add, that's very appealing to those of us who now spend time scrubbing spaghetti-sauce splashes off grout lines with a toothbrush.

Some people even use painted glass as an accent for walls, setting it into the wall singly or in a repeating pattern. Bottrell has installed such panels into a ceiling in the same way, and even cabinets can be fabricated with painted glass doors or panels.

Like the glass, the paint layer doesn't scratch easily. It's chemically cured in the same way that car paint is, leaving a strong enamel-like finish.

If you still have doubts, using thicker glass for added safety can give you some peace of mind, says Bottrell.

Sylvia Putz is a journalist with an interest in decor and design. She's written for the TV show Arresting Design; sputz@arrestingdesign.com.

NOTICE

Registration of Undertaking for Environmental Assessment ENVIRONMENT ACT

This is to advise that on December 11, 2008, Enviroclean Ltd./Power Vac Services registered an Asbestos Transfer / Bulking Facility for environmental assessment, in accordance with Part IV of the Environment Act.

Power Vac Services requires an asbestos / transfer bulking facility site for asbestos waste and requires a temporary storage location be relocated from the existing location on Cobequid Road to 51 Raddall Ave., Dartmouth.

Copies of the environmental assessment registration information may be examined at the following locations:

- X Cole Harbour Public Library, 51 Forest Hills Parkway, Dartmouth, NS
- X Woodlawn Public Library, 114 Woodlawn Road, Dartmouth, NS
- X Clean Nova Scotia, 126 Portland Street, Dartmouth, NS
- X Ecology Action Centre, 2705 Fern Lane, Halifax, NS
- X Nova Scotia Environment, Suite 224, 1595 Bedford Highway, Bedford, NS
- X Nova Scotia Environment, 5th Floor Library, 5151 Terminal Road, Halifax, NS
- X EA website (when available) <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/ea/>

The public is invited to submit written comments to:
Environmental Assessment Branch
Nova Scotia Environment
P.O. Box 442, Halifax, NS, B3J 2P8

on or before January 20, 2009 or contact the department at (902) 424-3230, (902) 424-0503 (Fax), or e-mail at EA@gov.ns.ca.

All submissions received, including personal information, will be made available for public review in the Nova Scotia Environment Library, 5th floor, Halifax Office, 5151 Terminal Road.

Published by: Enviro Clean Ltd. / Power Vac Services, 51 Raddall Ave., Dartmouth

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Courtesy of DRAFT

The November/December issue of DRAFT magazine features 9 Essential Holiday Cocktails: Snowflake, Yule Berry Tini, Peppermint Froth, Eggnog White Holiday, Poinsettia Cocktail, Chocolate Eggnog Martini, Baked Apple Pie Cocktail, World Peace Cocktail and Cranberry Sauced. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Food

For the Eggnog White Holiday cocktail, you'll need: 1 ounce White Chocolate Godiva Liqueur; 1 ounce Navan Cognac and eggnog.

November/December issue of DRAFT Magazine



And then ...

Shake all ingredients in a shaker with ice and strain into a glass. Garnish with gold flakes.

EDITOR: NINA DRAGICEVIC, NINA.DRAGICEVIC@METRONEWS.CA

Santa's little kitchen helpers

À la carte

Barb Holland



Metro Food Writer

I realize not everyone — OK very few — appreciate kitchen gadgets under the tree. But, for what it's worth (it is a free newspaper), I thought I would pass along some of my favourite small but useful kitchen gadgets. The operative word here is useful. If not useful, they don't clutter my drawers or cupboards for long.

Onion Goggles

If you chop a lot of onions as I do and have tried the many ways to prevent tearing,

here's one that works. I have bought and given many Onion Goggles to family and foodie friends.

Yes, a little corny looking, but these plastic glasses have a comfortable foam seal that protects eyes from irritating onion vapours. They come with a storage case to keep the goggles clean and avoid scratching. Give with a bag of onions for a gift they'll talk about for awhile. Cost: \$25.

Remote Digital Thermometers

Aside from a keen cook, every kitchen should have a thermometer, no exception. I particularly like Remote Digital Thermometers.

When it comes to roasting meat, variables such as shape, size and type of meat; cooking guidelines (min/lb or

kg) are just that — guidelines. A thermometer is virtually foolproof, so you can kiss overcooked, dry meat goodbye.

A steel probe inserted in the meat and the attached wire remains in the oven during cooking. The base, outside of the oven, displays the increasing internal temperature.

ature during cooking. An alarm beeps when the internal temperature you have set is reached.

It can also be used outside of the oven, when cooking sugar syrup for making candy or testing water temperature for bread making

are examples. They usually have a timer as well. There are quite a few available and prices range from \$30 to \$70.

Hands-Free Soap Dispenser

Why didn't someone think of this before? When prepping yucky things, a Hands-Free Soap Dispenser is such a good idea. The sensor dispenses soap touch-free to help avoid cross-contamination. Just place your hand under the sensor to dispense soap automatically. Battery operated (consider giving batteries and a nice bottle of liquid hand soap with it), Cost: \$25 to \$40.

erated (consider giving batteries and a nice bottle of liquid hand soap with it), Cost: \$25 to \$40.

Immersion Handheld Blender

An Immersion Handheld Blender is a handy gadget for puréeing soups right in the pot or whipping up pina colodas. Get one with a few attachments — a knife blade and container for chopping small amounts and a wire whip — for versatility.

Without taking up a lot of space, this multi-tasker is often just the thing to pull out rather than the big machines. Easier to clean, too.

Price ranges from \$30 to \$100 (depending on extra attachments).

Barb Holland is a professional home economist and food writer who believes in shopping locally and in season.

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Onion Goggles and a Remote Digital Thermometer.



Hands-Free Soap Dispenser and an Immersion Handheld Blender.



Eid al-Adha: The Feast of Sacrifice honours sparing of son for a ram

Eid al-Adha or Feast of Sacrifice is the most important feast of the Muslim calendar. It concludes the pilgrimage to Mecca. Eid al-Adha lasts for three days and commemorates Ibrahim's (Abraham) willingness to obey God by sacrificing his son.

Muslims believe the son to be Ishmael rather than Isaac as told in the Old Testament. Ishmael is considered the forefather of the Arabs. According to the Koran, Ibrahim was about to sacrifice his son when a voice from heaven stopped him and allowed him to sacrifice a ram instead. The feast re-enacts Ibrahim's obedience by sacrificing the lamb.

Habeeb Salloum is a resident of Toronto and author of numerous cookbooks: Arab Cooking on a Saskatchewan Homestead: Recipes and Recollections (Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, Regina, 2005), Classic Vegetarian Cooking from the Middle East and North Africa (Inter-Link Publishing Co., Northampton, MA, 2000), From the Lands of Figs and Olives: Over 300 Delicious and Unusual Recipes from the Middle East and North Africa (with James Peters) (Inter-Link Publishing Co., New York, 1995).

The following recipe is supplied by Salloum. The main dish is a whole lamb, minus the head. One-third goes to the family who sac-

rificed, bought or prepared the lamb and two-thirds goes to the poor around them (including neighbours, extended family, friends, etc). The reason why one-third goes to the family is to keep them humble and so that they eat from the same lamb that they are sacrificing and giving to the poor. Eating from the same lamb means the poor don't feel like the family who sacrificed it are above them.

Kharouf Mahshi — Stuffed Lamb

Serves 20 to 25.

INGREDIENTS:

- 20 to 25 pound lamb, thoroughly washed
- 1/2 cup lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons salt
- 4 teaspoons pepper

- 4 teaspoons allspice
- 1/2 pound butter
- 3 pounds beef or lamb, cut into very small pieces
- 4 medium onions, chopped
- 1 cup blanched almonds
- 1/2 cup cashew nuts
- 1/2 cup pine nuts
- 1/2 cup pistachio nuts
- 5 cups rice, rinsed
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne
- 8 cardamom seeds, crushed
- 6 cups water
- 2 cups plain yogurt
- 1 cup honey
- 2 teaspoons powdered garlic
- 2 teaspoons ground coriander seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon ginger

METHOD:

Thoroughly rub lamb both inside and out with a mixture of the lemon juice and 2 tablespoons of the salt. Set aside and allow standing for an hour. Combine 2 teaspoons pepper and 2 teaspoons allspice. Rub lamb inside and out with this mixture then set aside, ready for stuffing.

Melt butter in a large pot then sauté chopped meat over medium heat for 15 minutes. Stir in onions, almonds, cashews, pine nuts and pistachios. Sauté for a further 10 minutes or until nuts begin to brown. Stir in remaining salt, pepper and allspice, rice, raisins, cinnamon, nutmeg, cayenne, cardamom and water. Bring to a boil and cover. Simmer over medi-

um/low heat for 20 minutes. Stuff lamb with the contents of the pot, then sew closed and place in a large baking pan.

Make basting by combining remaining ingredients. Baste lamb and cover with aluminium foil. Bake in a 300° F preheated oven for 3 hours, then remove foil and baste. Bake covered for a further hour, basting twice.

Turn lamb over, baste, re-cover with foil, then cook for a further 1 1/2 hours or until the lamb meat is tender, basting every half hour. If baste finishes, baste with pan juices. Place lamb on a large platter. Remove sewing thread and serve piping hot along with salads. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Holiday Shopping Guide IV

SPECIAL FEATURES EDITOR: STEPHANIE BOMBA, STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

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#2



#3



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Green holiday tips

Visit: chapters.indigo.ca
A Greener Christmas, written by Sheherazade Goldsmith, \$28.

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The Philips and Swarovski Active Crystals line includes the USB Hear Ware Crystal memory keys, left. The keys retail at \$210 for 1GB of storage, and \$264 for 2GB of storage. Go to active-crystals.com for more. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide IV

Presents for aspiring shutterbugs

RICK MCGINNIS
rick.mcginis@metronews.ca

Digital snapshot cameras have reached a kind of quality plateau in the last year — image size hovers around the more-than-generous eight- to 12-megapixel range, and shutter lag (at least without flash) has been reduced to a fraction of a second at worst. Which means that you're basically buying based on price and which particular combination of features appeals to you.

THE BASICS:
Olympus FE-360 8-megapixel digital camera (\$129)

Canon Powershot SD1100 8-megapixel digital camera (\$179.99)

Kodak M1093 10-megapixel digital camera (\$199.95)

Olympus Stylus 1050 SW 10-megapixel digital camera (\$299)

Sony T77 10-megapixel digital camera (\$299.99)

Sony T700 10-megapixel digital camera (\$429.99)

On the low end, we have the **Olympus FE-360** and **Canon's SD 1100**, both eight-megapixel cameras in familiar styles — 2.5-inch LCD screens with controls laid out around and above the menu toggle button and the shutter on the right side of the camera. Olympus puts its selection of shooting modes down a couple of levels in the menu, while Canon puts them one button away. Zoom ranges are about equal, and both cameras passed the acid test of being used by my five-year-old daughter. The Canon, sole among the cameras tested, gives you the option of a rangefinder to look through when bright sunlight makes the LCD hard to use.

Kodak's M1093 is about as basic, though the controls have been tidied up a bit, and Kodak's Smart Capture shooting mode remains one of the most user-friendly automatic shooting modes on the market. **Olympus' 1050 SW** is a flush-lens/sliding-lens cover model that's built like a tank, and meant to withstand rough treat-

ment and weather. The back contains the usual array of controls, but Olympus has built in an accelerometer-controlled interface where you can choose and set shooting

Olympus E-420 digital SLR w/25mm Zuiko Digital lens (\$679)

Once you've gotten tired of the limitations of a point-and-shoot camera, you'll want to move up to some-

zoom that can (and did) pick off a hummingbird hovering by a feeder and a full range of automatic shooting modes, as well as manual controls that approximate a full SLR.

and a retro leather camera case and strap in a very pretty gift box for \$779.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION:
Kodak Zi6 pocket dig-

ital video camera (\$179.99)
Canon Vixia HF11 HD digital video camera (\$1,299)
hand, is about as simple a camera as there is. There's a power button and a shutter toggle on the back that handles the zoom, two buttons for playback and stop, and a button on the front that pops the USB connector from the side. It's about the same size as a point-and-shoot camera, and requires no neck strap or padded bag. The image quality is a far cry from the Vixia, but it's immensely usable, and while the movies you'll shoot with the Vixia will look great on your flatscreen TV, the Zi6 might end up capturing more of your family's life.

ACCESSORIES:
Kodak W820 wireless digital photo frame (\$229.95)

Sony DPF80 digital photo frame (\$199.99)

It'll take some fiddling, but **Kodak's 8-inch W820** digital frame will connect to your home wi-fi network and stream photos from your collection, bypassing the CF card slot or internal memory. Kodak has also done away with the tiny remote that they assume you'll lose, and put the menu controls on a touch strip around the edge of the very minimal frame — an innovation that's truly notable in the somewhat stagnant digital frame market.

Sony's DPF80 is equally minimal — a glossy little non-widescreen 8-inch slab that accepts the company's signature Memory Stick card. There's no wi-fi, but the LCD screen is up to Sony's high standards, though the stand at the back — a rubberized stick that resembles a tabletop radio antenna — feels a bit stiff and not up to Sony's usual quality.

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options by tapping on the camera body — once to select, twice to accept. It's strange at first, but it's responsive and quickly becomes second nature.

On the high end, both in terms of price and design, we have a pair of Sony sliding-lens cover cameras. The **T77** and **T700** are basically siblings with sleek aluminum bodies and touchscreen interfaces on the back. The 3.5-inch widescreen LCD on the back of the T700 is a half-inch wider than its brother, though both cameras let you select the area of the frame you want to focus on with a tap. Image quality is up to Sony's usual high standards.

ONE STEP BEYOND:
Olympus SP-570UZ 10-megapixel camera (\$449)

Panasonic Lumix LX3K 10-megapixel camera (\$549.99)

thing with more range. **The Olympus SP-570UZ** is a "superzoom" camera, part of a range of cameras that have been gaining popularity with amateur photographers tired of the anemic 3x zoom range of pocket cameras. It has a startling 20x optical



Panasonic's LX3 has become a big hit with professionals looking for a small camera for travel and location scouting. It's accomplished this by putting its aspect-ratio controls on the Leica lens barrel, letting you compose with a full widescreen LCD on the back and making its low-light capability the best on the market.

Finally, **Olympus' E-420** was reviewed here before, but the company's stellar lens range has come up with a 25mm "pancake" lens that transforms this little SLR into a true joy. Dispensing with the cumbersome zoom that usually comes with this sort of camera — and the flexibility, naturally — you end up with a light, elegant machine that practically begs you to shoot like a pro. As part of an exclusive deal with Henry's, Olympus has brought their Komachi kit over from Japan — an E-420 with the 25mm lens

ital video camera (\$179.99)

Canon Vixia HF11 HD digital video camera (\$1,299)

These two machines exist on the opposite ends of the video camera spectrum. **Canon's Vixia HF11** is a full HD camera that's been used by professional crews as a B camera to get cut-aways and wide shots. Small — it sits in the hand like a pop can — and relatively stripped down in terms of controls, it records its widescreen HD image to a 32 GB internal memory card, with an expansion slot for an SDHC card. It's easy to hold, and the 12x zoom is more than generous.

Kodak's Zi6, on the other



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Holiday

Shopping Guide IV

Sweet treats



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#6

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Holiday Shopping Guide IV

Some beauty-ful gift ideas for her

The best and the brightest of 2008's new cosmetics could be some great presents

JANINE FALCON
for Metro Canada



Hankering for an improved complexion, lusher lashes or super-glossy hair? Here's a round-up of some of the year's most effective stuff to help you get what you need.

Skin care

A new study from the University of Toronto suggests that greens+ plant-based supplements may contribute to the reduction of the stress hormone cortisol, which is linked to obesity, cardiovascular disease, mental health and acne. While further



study is required to confirm findings, preliminary results make

Genuine Health healthy skin with greens+ (156g, \$27.99) something more than hope in a jar.

Clarins Pure Melt Cleansing Gel (\$36) dissolves stub-

born make-up and dirt, and rinses cleanly away to leave skin soft, fresh and bright.

With lactic acid to help exfoliate, **Dermalogica Age Smart Skin Resurfacing**



Cleanser (\$46) gently smooths skin as it cleanses.

Makeup

Oily skin's new best bud, **Smashbox Photofinish Light** (\$44) is a weightless primer lotion that ensures makeup stays put without feeling mask-y.



GOSH Velvet Touch Eye Liners (\$13 each) are waterproof, creamy-smooth, and come in a gazillion colours.



Flake-proof **Clinique Lash Power Long Wearing Formula** (\$18) beats humidity, rain, tears and oily lids, yet washes off with very warm water. Tied for "best-of" placement is just-released **Lancôme Ôscillation** (\$39), which, with its micro-vibrating wand and gel-like formula, curls, lengthens, and volumizes for a faux-lash finish.

The most exciting blush debut since Benetint,

Hair care Besides giving the longtime-singleton shampoo a partner, **Head & Shoulders Conditioner** (\$6.99) helps defeat dandruff and really does leave hair shiny and healthy.



The most makeup bang for your buck, the **Sephora Ultimate Blockbuster Collector's Edition palette** offers more than \$300-worth of cosmetics for just \$58.

John Frieda Luminous Colour Glaze (\$13.99) has a



This year, curly-haired girls fell for **re:coil shampoo, conditioner** (\$20 each) and **curl activator** (\$19) from Canadian company **AG Hair Cosmetics**. The trio delivers frizz-free curls with just a bit of product.

Green star

Big green kudos to a grow-

ing number of earth-friendly lines, such as **Live Clean** and **La Coupe**

Orgnx haircare and **Cargo Plant-Love** cosmetics. Live Clean and Orgnx are formulated with natural and certified-organic botanicals, and housed in recyclable bottles; Plant-Love



steps up with compostable packaging. Canadian-made all three, their eco-footprint is lighter

than that of imports. Runner up: U.S.-made natural-based **David Babaii for WildAid** hair care, with support from actress Kate Hudson and 10 per cent of proceeds marked for WildAid, a global wildlife conservation organization.

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New fashion series on Cosmo TV

Catch The Rachel Zoe Project, a new six-part series that follows celebrity stylist Rachel Zoe as she juggles runway shows, celebrity clients and her own design business in the fast-paced world of fashion styling. Premieres Jan. 12 on Cosmopolitan TV. **METRO NEWS SERVICE**

Style



Add style to your wrapping regiment

Make the task of wrapping gifts more enjoyable this season or surprise a shoeaholic on your gift list with a cute Mary Jane shoe-style tape dispenser from Scotch Tape. The dispenser holds regular and super-sized rolls of tape. Available now at major retailers nationwide including Wal-Mart, Staples, Chapters/Indigo, Rexall and Grand & Toy for \$10-\$14.99. For more information, visit scotchtape.ca.

METRO NEWS SERVICE

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE COLACINO, ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Glam it up this New Year's Eve



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Style File

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Vancouver's Kim Elbo has a passion for fashion. Here she shares the latest style tips.

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The creator of the hit TV show Baywatch is looking for the next Pamela Anderson to star in a new version of the series based in New Zealand. Anderson starred as lifeguard C. J. Parker in the 1990s series. IMDB.COM

Entertainment

EDITOR: TINA COSTANZA, TINA.COSTANZA@METRONEWS.CA



Next samurai

Keanu Reeves has signed on to star in 47 Ronin, according to Variety. Set in 18th-century Japan, the film will follow the true story of a group of samurai swordsmen who avenge the death of their master. [E! NEWS ONLINE](http://E!NEWS.ONLINE)

Brandy lacks rawness

Coldplay, Common, Alice Russell also drop new music

MusicReviews

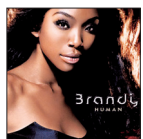
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Brandy

Album: Human
Label: Epic/Sony BMG
Rating: ●●●½

FOR ALL THIS Grammy-winning singer/actress has endured of late — specifically, a 2006 car accident that resulted in a fatality and ensuing legal fallout from all parties concerned — one would surmise an outpouring of lyrical and musical emotion on Brandy's first new outing in four years. Save for a chilling Shattered Heart, any thankfulness of being alive, being able to love and yearn for love, yada yada yada, is bathed in predictable, repetitive, synth-heavy R&B and all the adult contemporary softness of a white down comforter. Is it really that wrong to occasionally emoté some rawness?

Ian Nathanson/for Metro Canada



Coldplay

Album: Prospekt's March
Label: EMI
Rating: ●●●●½

WITH A MEGA-SUCCESSFUL album released just a few months ago, Coldplay didn't have to release an EP of left over material from their Viva La Vida sessions. But they did, more likely because they actually like their fans than for a cash grab. The eight-track count is a bit misleading though — three songs are remixes of Viva songs and one is a 48-second piano track. Still, the three

his latest though he just wants to have fun, teaming up with Pharrell Williams for a number of mindless club beats. What we can fault him for however, is creating

bland, been-there-done-that rhymes and beats. Lets hope he gets this diversion (early mid-life crisis?) out of his system quickly.

Bryan Borzykowski
/for Metro
Canada



Holding On To Whatever is the third full-length album from Winnipeg rock band The Waking Eyes.

Waking Eyes took four years to find right sound

NOELLE MUNARETTO
for Metro Canada

It took two side projects, three B-side discs, four years, and over one hundred songs for The Waking Eyes to finally release their third full-length album, Holding On To Whatever It Is, to eager fans and critics.

The Winnipeg-based quartet debuted their latest musical creation to stellar reviews, and recently completed a residency at a Toronto rock club.

For Matt Peters, one of the Waking Eyes' lead vocalists, the success is sweet. He also says it's overdue.

"This record was a long time coming and a long time in the works," says Peters. "We just started writing songs, and we didn't really know what we were going to make. We didn't know where it was going to go because it was a process of re-introducing ourselves to our creative instincts."

Peters, along with fellow band members Joey Penner, Rusty Matyas and Steve Senkiw, wrote and recorded from the fall of 2005 until the summer of 2007. To select songs for the album, the band summoned their elementary school spirit and created star rating system. They were left with 12 incredibly different, eclectic and sonorous tracks. Peters wouldn't have it any other way either.

"The songs that we ended up choosing, sure

they're kind of all over the place, but that's sort of what we do," he says. "That's our sound — we don't really have one."

The uptempo feel Holding On To Whatever It Is exudes was also a purposeful choice, says Peters. "All and all we definitely wanted to make something that was more danceable," he adds.

Since their formation in 2001, The Waking Eyes have struck a chord with the indie music scene in both Canada and abroad. After signing with Coalition Entertainment Records, they were nominated for a Casby Award in 2004, took home the 2005 Canadian Independent Music Award for Favourite Group Of The Year, and most recently graced this October's cover of CHART Magazine.

Having toured with Finger Eleven earlier this year, the band is now gearing up for a cross-Canada tour by performing their new material. Most of all, Peters says the residency introduces people to their unique sound.

"I don't really think there are that many bands doing what we do," says Peters. "I think we're trying to carve out our own niche."

Aside from the new record's release, Peters says the best part about this experience is being able to play alongside his fellow bandmates.

"I don't know any band who is genuinely as attached as we are. We love each other and that's good," he says. "I don't want to make music with anyone else."

"Sweeeeeeeet!"



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Alice Russell

Album: Pot of Gold
Label: Little Poppet/Six Degrees/Outside
Rating: ●●●●½

HAD THE LIKES of Amy Winehouse and Aimee Duffy not emerged before her, this U.K. songstress' fourth album would have perked up many ears with her throwback to '60s Motown-meets-Stax soulfulness. What does set Russell apart is her ability to wail away to near ear-piercing screams as if she longs for the attention above the punchy horns and backing choirs. And while she capably works some magic on a slow-burning gospel-tinged cover of Gnarls Barkley's Crazy, much of Russell's efforts come across calculated and flat following the high-energy opening cuts.

Ian Nathanson/for Metro Canada



new tunes are as good as anything off their recent full-length — especially Glass of Water — while the reworked tunes are a nice treat.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Common

Album: Universal Mind Control
Label: Geffen/Universal
Rating: ●●●

YOU CAN'T BLAME Common for wanting to rest his overactive brain — for the last few years the rapper has been the go-to guy for conscious, thoughtful hip-hop. On



Human is the first album from R&B singer Brandy in four years.

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Movie producers have ruled out a fourth Jurassic Park blockbuster because the story died with author Michael Crichton, left. The sci-fi writer passed away in November at the age of 66 after losing his battle against cancer. IMDB.COM

Pearl Jam to reissue Ten

MUSIC Pearl Jam has unearthed a host of unreleased tracks and special surprises from its vaults for a reissue of its 1991 debut album, Ten.

Four different editions will be available March 24 from its former Epic Records label; pre-orders began yesterday at PearlJam.com.

Each version includes a digitally remastered version of the original album as well as a new remix of the set by longtime producer Brendan O'Brien, who did not work on Ten but produced Pearl Jam's subsequent four albums. Bassist Jeff Ament and designer Andy Fischer teamed to revamp the artwork.

The O'Brien disc also includes six previously unreleased songs from the era: Early versions of Breath and State of Love and Trust, Brother (with vocals, not the instrumental version from the 2003 rarities collection Lost Dogs), Just a

Girl, Evil Little Goat and 2,000 Mile Blues, a Stevie Ray Vaughan-inspired jam with improvised vocals from frontman Eddie Vedder.

New material

- The Legacy edition of Ten adds a DVD of Pearl Jam's previously unreleased 1992 performance on MTV Unplugged, including a never-aired version of Oceans. The audio has been remixed in 5.1 surround sound.

Band members have been asking O'Brien to take a crack at a complete remix for years, and he gave the idea a trial run when he remixed the Ten tracks Once, Black and Alive for Pearl Jam's 2004 greatest hits album Rearviewmirror.

"The original Ten sound is what millions of people bought, dug and loved, so I was initially hesitant to mess around with that," O'Brien said of the album, which has sold 9.6 million copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. "After years of persistent nudging from the band, I was able to wrap my head around the idea of offering it as a companion piece to the original — giving a fresh take on it, a more direct sound."

REUTERS

Scarpetta 'best thing' author's got

Before there was Bones, Dr. G: Medical Examiner, Dexter, Forensic Files, CSI, and the many, many other TV shows revolving around forensics, there was Chief Medical Examiner Kay Scarpetta — the heroine of numerous bestselling books by crime writer Patricia Cornwell.

"I'm my own worst enemy," Cornwell tells Metro World News from her penthouse apartment overlooking Central Park. "I have helped to start this forensic thriller genre, which has spawned this incredible industry. At times, I feel like this has almost put me out of business."

But even though Scarpetta has been a fixture in the contemporary suspense genre for 20 years — way before Horatio Caine was just a twinkle in David Caruso's eye — Scarpetta isn't going anywhere. And she's far from going out of business.

"She's the best thing I've got," Cornwell admits in her faint southern drawl, left over from her time at Davidson college in Virginia and her stint at the Office of the Chief Medical



Author Patricia Cornwell has just released the 16th book in her popular Kay Scarpetta series.

Examiner of Virginia. "What do I have that no one else does? Her. I have her. Nobody else has this character and if I deserve her or not, I have her. And she depends on me to write about her because

she knows I have nothing better to do."

That's why Cornwell decided to name her 16th book in the Scarpetta series after her heroine. In Scarpetta, Kay takes up assignment in New York City

"She depends on me to write about her because she knows I have nothing better to do."

Patricia Cornwell on her fictional character Dr. Kay Scarpetta

where she must help solve a strange and gruesome murder where the lead suspect is a man with achondroplasia (dwarfism). The work also features many of Cornwell's traits — cutting-edge technology, weaving plotlines, and, of course, medical mysteries.

But it is always Scarpetta who features most prominently, both Cornwell's books and in mind.

"She is very real to me and she is always with me. But she is not me. She's a mentally intellectually disciplined person. She doesn't have a DUI or a mood disorder or all of the things that I've got. She says the right thing and does the right thing."

Cornwell pauses then laughs. "But I'm probably more fun at a party."

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Dark Knight score Oscar eligible

AWARDS Officials at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences have reversed a decision on the original score from The Dark Knight and deemed it eligible for an Oscar in the original score category.

The executive committee of the academy's music branch initially ruled there were too many composers involved in the score; the Academy generally considers only scores that are the work of one or at most two composers.

REUTERS

L.A. critics name Wall-E best film

WIN Hollywood's Oscar race heated up on Tuesday when a couple movies drew honours from critics, including the surprise choice of animated Wall-E as the year's best film by a major group of reviewers.

The Los Angeles Film Critics Association chose Disney/Pixar's Wall-E, about a love-struck robot stranded on Earth, as the best movie of 2008 and picked the action-packed Batman flick The Dark Knight as runner-up.

REUTERS

WIN a chance to see John Gracie at the Schooner Showroom

You and 9 friends could win tickets to the show, as well as a collection of John Gracie's Christmas CD's. To enter, send an e-mail to susan.whitty@metronews.ca. Enjoy the holiday stylings of John Gracie, Dec. 20th at 8pm.



Contest closes
Dec. 17, 2008 at noon.
One entry per person.
Winner will be contacted
via email. Must be at 19+.



No marriage for Bynes anytime soon

Amanda Bynes declares she feels "trapped" by marriage in next month's Cosmopolitan. USMAGAZINE.COM

entertainment**31**

Actor's brother in game of Russian roulette, lawyer says

Police released a woman arrested in the shooting death of actor Mark Ruffalo's brother, after she told investigators he shot himself playing with a gun, her attorney said yesterday.

Jail records confirmed that Shaha Mishaal Adham, 26, was released late Tuesday night.

Her attorney, Ronald Richards, said Adham was at the Beverly Hills home of her friend, Scott Ruffalo, on Dec. 1 to recover keys to a car she lent him. With her in the room, Ruffalo shot himself, Richards said. "He plays with guns by pointing them at his head and saying words like 'Russian roulette' or 'pop,' and he accidentally shot himself," Richards said.

A representative from the Beverly Hills Police Department could not immediately be reached for comment.

Richards said a third individual was in the room when Ruffalo shot himself, but he would not say who that was. Adham was in a state of shock and fled the



Actor Mark Ruffalo.

"He plays with guns by pointing them at his head and saying words like Russian Roulette or pop."

Attorney Ronald Richards

scene of the shooting, on the advice of her boyfriend, Brian Scofield, 29. Adham and Ruffalo, 39, a hair-

dresser, knew each other because she paid him "hundreds of dollars to blow dry her hair." **REUTERS**

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Perry apologizes to Allen
Katy Perry reportedly made a fat joke about fellow singer Lily Allen. So Allen accused Perry of being a knockoff who doesn't write her own songs. Perry then apologized. **E! NEWS ONLINE**



Dutch Robinson and Judy Robicheau at the Lion's Head Tavern Christmas Daddies after-party.



Stephanie Woodin, left, Ian Robinson and Roxanne Robinson relaxing after a successful Christmas Daddies Telethon.



Dr. Henry Bishop and Chelsea Nisbett at the Black Cultural Society's Silver Christmas concert.



Meghan Timmons and Mike McCulloch upstairs at the Halifax Alehouse.



Shannon Flynn and Matt Gibbons at the Halifax Alehouse Beefest.

Beerfest and benevolence

HalifaxScene

Jamie Paterson



The holiday shopping season is in full swing and like many men, I need a helping hand. To the rescue: Tara Clements and the gang at Arbonne International. Their notice crossed my desk and said it all: "Men's Shopping Night" and "Scotch Tasting."

I made my way to the North Magazine of the Halifax Citadel with visions of Glenfiddich dancing in my head. Guys were enjoying chair massages and a cash bar, shopping the way Santa intended it to be. Thanks for letting me get a few things crossed off my list.

Fortunately, it was just a short roll down the hill to the Halifax Alehouse to find

a beer tasting night with brews from around the world being poured.

The second annual Beerfest was underway, complete with musical entertainment provided by Shameless. With 22 beers on tap at last count, the Alehouse was the perfect spot for this sample night.

It will also be the location for the final Molson Give-R of the year. The Dartmouth Pig Dogs rugby team has invited one and all for 5 p.m. tomorrow to shake off the work week stress and help raise money for Operation Red Nose. This year alone, the Give-R's have raised almost \$11,000. I'll definitely be there with my contribution!

The Black Cultural Centre was all decked out in silver for a special anniversary evening Saturday. The annual Christmas concert was a tribute to 25 years in the community, with special guest performer Chelsea Nisbett.

From school choirs to EC-

MA Awards, Nisbett's soaring voice combines R&B, soul and acoustic rock. Her debut CD *New Beginnings* is available now in stores. It features Nisbett's own songs, some of which are already popping up on radio across North America.

Saturday night was the first time the Black Cultural Centre has played host to this amazing talent. The evening also featured Percy Riley and the Nova Gospel Ensemble with a spirited performance from the Bridgeway Beats drummers from Bridgeway Academy.

Sunday marked another anniversary in our community. It's been 45 years since the first Christmas Daddies Telethon aired, making it one of the longest-running telethons in North America.

Preparations for this event take an entire year, and the 2008 broadcast took in a record \$892,422. Since the telethon's first year in 1964, Christmas Daddies has now raised

more than \$24 million for less fortunate children.

After the broadcast, organizers and staff blew off some steam at the Lion's Head Tavern. Studio "L" — as it is affectionately known — laid out a spread of food and drink for volunteers and performers. The karaoke machine was set to go, and what to my wondering eyes should appear but the legendary Dutch Robinson to sing for all assembled.

Robinson was one of the many Christmas Daddies performers to volunteer his time and help out the people of our great community. Only in Halifax could you wander into a pub and see the likes of Dutch Robinson singing karaoke.

I wonder what sights I'll see this week? E-mail me at beatlejammie@eastlink.ca to point me in the right direction!

When he's not making the Scene, Jamie Paterson hosts *The Drive* and *The Beatlebrunch* on KOOL FM in Halifax



Denise and Terry Purcell celebrate the holidays at the West in Nova Scotian.



"Mr. & Mrs. Scrooge" Helen and Kevin Nicol at the Lion's Head Tavern for the Christmas Daddies after-party.

Food + Entertaining

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HOLIDAY PLANNING CHECKLIST

Getting and keeping your family organized over the holidays can be a daunting task, but do it right and your holidays will be stress-free!

As soon as December hits, most of us get caught up in the whirlwind that is the holiday season. This time of year usually requires a lot of planning, not to mention great organizational skills. To help you have a happy, healthy, and stress-free holiday, we've created a holiday checklist, filled with simple, time-sensitive reminders that will help you stay on track.

3 weeks before

- Create a holiday budget.
- Make a list of all the gifts you want to buy and for whom. Keep a copy on you at all times.
- Make an appointment with your stylist (and/or manicurist, massage therapist, etc.).



(continued online...)

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Stephanie Coffill, left, Scott Morrison and Lori Matheson at the Halifax Alehouse's Beefest.

Trista and Ryan have another on the way

Former Bachelorette Trista Sutter and her firefighter husband, Ryan, are thrilled to announce they are having a baby girl, due in April. The couple has a 16-month-old boy named Maxwell. [INTOUCHWEEKLY.COM](#)

NBC cashes in on Leno

IntelleVision



WHAT HAPPENED? Two weeks ago, the likely defection of Jay Leno for ABC to compete with Conan O'Brien, his network-appointed successor, looked like little more than a slap fight between agents, a power play whose significance wasn't resonating far beyond the few square miles beyond Wilshire Boulevard and La Brea Avenue. Today, however, it seems like NBC's decision to give Leno his own 10 p.m. show, Monday to Friday,leaping from late night to primetime, was something like doubling down and betting everything on black. Increasing the number of unscripted hours on primetime and cutting back on the hour-long dramas that have traditional-

You get the feeling that all this talk about numbers and integration is leaving wet chairs in boardrooms and offices from coast to coast and even overseas.

ly filled the slot is playing out like a cross between canceling the Beverly Hillbillies and storming the Bastille. "The model for network television is basically broken," said Rino Scanzoni, CIO for the media division of WPP, a Dublin-based communications firm, in a New York Times story. "They cannot continue to go down this path," he added ominously, adding that the new Leno show could be "positive for the advertising community." Viewers, Scanzoni told the Times, are spending more time "snacking" on TV programs "instead of digesting them week in and week out," a trend his industry sees reflected in the wild, viral popularity of clips from comedy and variety shows on YouTube and Hulu.

Leno's new show would be even more likely to feature integrated product placement, and interstitials with local news talent that will make affiliates happy, speculated a host of ad and media types interviewed by the Times. You get the feeling that all this talk about numbers and integration is leaving wet chairs in boardrooms and offices from coast to coast and even overseas. It's nice to know that someone's going to have a merry Christmas this year. It's bad news for out-of-work actors and film crews in Los Angeles and New York, though, according to the L.A. Times. "Now the hits don't pay for all of the failures," Laura Caraccioli-Davis, executive VP of Starcom, a Chicago ad agency, told the L.A. Times, "and the

advertising community won't pay for all failures either." "The threshold for this show is lower than for a scripted program," said Marc Graboff, co-chairman of NBC Entertainment. "Broadcast television can never be the way that it has been for the last 50 years because of all the structural changes going on in our industry," he added. "But we are offering something to our advertisers that is more innovative." It's strange, though, that the innovation on which NBC, at least, is setting so much of its future looks so very much like something Steve Allen would have hosted almost 50 years ago. It's too much irony, even for me.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

See complete online movie listings, trailers, reviews and purchase tickets at [metronews.ca/movies](#)

Plimpton, Sanchez join Matthew Perry's new show

PILOT Martha Plimpton and Kiele Sanchez have joined Matthew Perry on his dark comedy Showtime pilot The End of Steve. In the title role, the Friends star plays an ego-maniacal local talk show host who is on a reluctant path to redemption. Plimpton (Broadway's Pal Joey revival) will play the show's producer, and Sanchez (Samantha Who?) his pretty co-host. Additionally, Eddie Shin (That '80s Show) has joined the cast as Steve's boss.



Nate Torrence, who co-starred with Perry on NBC's Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip, will play Steve's assistant. Dreama Walker (Gossip Girl) is on board as the hot teen daughter of the manager of the apartment complex where Steve lives.

REUTERS

Hip-hop musicians The Roots late night's new house band

MUSIC Cult hip-hop band the Roots will serve as the house band on Late Night With Jimmy Fallon, which premieres March 2 on NBC. Fallon, who is filling the slot to be vacated by Conan O'Brien, made the announcement Monday. The announcement appeared on the show's newly launched website. Fallon is taking over Late Night for Conan O'Brien, who is in turn taking over



The Tonight Show from Jay Leno. The Roots will get in a handful of live dates before tapping begins on the show. Tour dates include Dec. 30 in Atlantic City, N.J., and a four-date run in Japan in mid-January.

REUTERS



Marisa Tomei

Tomei in talks to play mom

ROLE Fox Searchlight is in talks with Marisa Tomei, John C. Reilly and Jonah Hill to star in an intergenerational comedy. The project, at one point called Safety Man, will center on a budding romance between a man (Reilly) and woman (Tomei). Her son (Hill) attempts to foil their efforts. It comes from indie filmmakers Jay and Mark Duplass, who are expected to begin production in the first half of 2009. Tomei is drawing awards attention for her role as a sympathetic exotic dancer in The Wrestler, Reilly (Walk Hard) is starring in the vampire picture Cirque du Freak, and Hill (Superbad) has been cast in Ricky Gervais' directorial debut, This Side of the Truth.

REUTERS

HA	H	D	B	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
12/10/08	31	31	31	ABC	News (N)	ABC Wild News	Inside Edition	Chronicle	Pushing Daisies (N)	Private Practice (N)	Sexy Money	
	7	7	7	ASN	The Road to Avonlea	Instant Star	TMZ (N)	Pushing Daisies (N)	Private Practice (N)	Sexy Money		
	11	11	11	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	The Santa Clause *** (1994, Comedy)	Tim Allen.	CBC News: The National	The Hour		
	2	2	2	CBC-F	Terre humaine	Pyramide (SC)	Virginie (SC)	L'Epicierie	Le Match des étoiles (N) (SC)	M pour musique (HDTV) (SC)	Le Téléjournal	
	32	32	32	CBS	News (N)	Evening News	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Old Christine	Gary Unmarr	Criminal Minds (N)	CSI: NY
	69	69	69	CFTM	TVA 18 heures	Le Cercle (SC)	Km/h (SC)	Poule-oeufs or	Maman Last Call (2005, Com. dramatique)	Sophie Lorain.	TVA 22 heures	
	6	6	6	CIHF	Entertainment	ET Canada	Bones	Bones (HDTV PA)	The Guard (N)	News (N)		
	9	9	9	CJCH	talk	Hollywood	CSI: NY "The Triangle"	Law & Order "Sweetie"	Criminal Minds (N)	News (N)		
	10	10	10	ELTV	Swap Shop (Live)	Fuelin' Around	Au Natural (N)	Doc Talk	Fuelin' Around	EastLink Television		
	36	36	36	FOX	Deal-No Deal	The Simpsons	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Secret Millionaire (N)	Bones (HDTV PA)	Fox First	
primetime	12	12	12	NBC	News (N)	NBC News	Hollywood	Extra (N)	Little Spirit: Christmas	Life "Canyon Flowers"	Law & Order	
	29	29	29	NW	World News	Business	CBC News	Newman	The Hour	CBC News: The National	Extreme	
	4	4	4	PBS-B	NewsHour With Jim Lehrer	Greater Boston	Viewer Favorites		P.O.V. "Inheritance" (HDTV) (N)			
	35	35	35	PBS-D	NewsHour With Jim Lehrer	Business Rpt.	Worldfocus	The Armenian Americans		The Armenian Genocide		
	68	68	68	TQS	(6:30) Le Retour (SC)	Le Plus beau jour de l'année (2005, Com. dramatique)		Pushing Daisies (SC)		110 pour cent		
	23	96	96	BNN	Business News	Headline	Market Call	Commodities	Workopolis TV	Business News	Squeeze Play	Market Call
	18	18	18	CNN	(5) The Situation Room	Lou Dobbs Tonight	Campbell Brown: No Bias		Larry King Live	Cooper 360		
	54	54	54	GOLF	Big Break X: Michigan	Top 10	European Tour Year in Review	Golf Central	Year in Review (Part 1 of 2) (N)	PGA Review		
	52	52	52	RSE	Prime Time Sports	World Combat League	The Ultimate Fighter		Best Damn Sports Show	Sportsnet Con.		
	55	55	55	SCOR	Hockey Talk	Game On	NBA Basketball Indiana Pacers at Toronto Raptors. (HDTV) (Live)		Score Tonight			
sports	45	45	45	SPD	Unique Whips	Pinks	Pass Time	Am. Thunder	Am. Thunder	Pinks	Pinks Outtakes	Wrecked
	53	53	53	TSN	Off the Record	SportsCentre	That's Hockey!	NHL Hockey Calgary Flames at Detroit Red Wings. (HDTV) (Live)				SportsCentre
	43	43	43	FAM	Zoeys 101	Life Derek	Wizards-Place	That's-Raven	Zack & Cody	Natural-Sadie	Han. Montana	Life Derek
	44	44	44	TOON	6teen (DVS)	Santa Claus	Bugs Bunny & Tweety Show	Wayside	Johnny Test	Futurama	The Critic	
	26	26	26	TREE	Max & Ruby	Santa Coming to Town	Night Grdn	Backyardigans	A Very Fairy Christmas	Miss Spider	Comfy Couch	
	27	27	27	YTV	Drake & Josh	iCarly	Romeo!	Home Improve.	Fresh Prince	Sabrina-Witch	Futurama	Prank Patrol
	16	16	16	A&E	Cold Case Files	CSI: Miami (HDTV)	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Dog the Bounty Hunter	Parking Wars		
	70	70	70	APTN	News	Canadian Geographic	Copper Thunderbird		APTN National News: Contact	Tribal Treks		
	50	50	50	BET	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live	Rosario Dawson. (Live)	New Jack City *** (1991, Crime Drama), Ice-T		Brother			
	37	37	37	BRVO	Street Legal	Desperate Housewives	Berkeley	Bravo/Videos	Wingfield	Letters	Arts & Minds	
family	25	25	25	CMT	Totally	The Gift	Cheerleaders	Cheerleaders	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Reba	Hope & Faith
	49	49	49	COM	Laughs	Comedy Now	Air Force	Just for Laughs	Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	House Party
	153	153	153	COURT	Missing Link "Miracles"	The Investigators	Cops Uncut	Dumb Criminal	Spy Web: MI 6 "MI 6"	Investigators	Mayday	
	38	38	38	DISC	How It's Made	How It's Made	Daily Planet (N)	Cash Cab	Destroyed	Monster Moves	\$1M Listing	
	34	48	48	HGTV	Holmes on Homes	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Mansions	The Stagers	Property Virgin	Unsellable	NCIS
	46	46	46	HIST	Captain Cook: Obsession	NCIS "Switch"	Pimp My Ride	Pimp My Ride	Pimp My Ride	Pimp My Ride	Degrassi: Next	
	17	17	17	MM	Born to Be	disBand	Pimp My Ride	Pimp My Ride	Pimp My Ride	Pimp My Ride	Fabulous Life	
	19	19	19	MMM	MusicProfile	mmmtop10.com	MusicProfile	Back In	Back In	Revival	Where You At	
	201	201	201	M1	(6) Nancy Drew (2007)	December Boys ** (2007, Drama)	Daniel Radcliffe.		Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix			
	48	23	23	OLN	The Amazing Race 6	Ed's Up	Videos	The Amazing Race 13	Adventures	Ed's Up	Word Travels	
cable variety	51	51	51	PEACH	Seinfeld	Friends	House-Payne	House-Payne	Conspiracy Theory ** (1997, Suspense)	Mel Gibson, Julia Roberts.		
	206	206	206	PIX	(6:20) The Gift (2000)	(8:15) Canvas * (1992, Suspense)	Gary Busey.	Anaconda * (1997, Suspense), Ice Cube				
	67	67	67	RDI	RDI en direct	RDI en direct	24 Heures en 60 minutes	Grands reportages (SC)	Le Téléjournal (SC)	RDI en direct		
	39	39	39	SHOW	EastEnders	Saxondale	Kink in Hair	Kink in Hair	Durham County	Billable Hours	G-Spot	Starter Wife
	40	40	40	SLICE	X-Weighted "Heather"	Til Debt-Part	Rich Poor	X-Weighted "Gaia"	Real Housewives of OC	Cattle Drive	Ghost Hunters	
	47	47	47	SPACE	Stargate SG-1 "Tin Man"	Lost "I Do"	UFC Unleashed	UFC Unleashed	UFC Fight for the Troops (HDTV) (Live)			
	14	14	14	SPIKE	CSI: NY "Raising Shane"	The Ellen DeGeneres Show	TMZ (N)	etalk	Scoring With the Stars	Tonight Show		
	57	98	98	STAR	FashionTele	Look-A-Like	Jon & Kate	Jon & Kate	Jon & Kate Plus 8	Solved		
	56	34	34	TROP	Reality	Ad Persuasion	Beverly Hills, 90210	Reality	What Happen?	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld
	20	20	20	TV5	(6:55) Cible	Journal de Fr2	Toute une histoire	Ca se soigne (2008, Drame)	Thierry Lhermitte.	Les Filles,	Partir	
cable variety	28	28	28	V	Side Effects "Skin Deep"	Murder, She Wrote	Summer Wine	Dinnerladies	Secret Santa ** (2003, Drama)	Jennie Garth.		
	60	97	97	VIVA	Mysterious Ways	Judging Amy	Commander in Chief	The West Wing	Supersize vs. Superskinny	Got the Look		
	22	22	22	W	Shopping Bags	Style by Jury	Will & Grace	Friends	Grocery Bag	Maxed Out		
	251	251	251	WGN	Be-Millionaire	Evening News	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	Stylista	Stylista (N)	WGN News	

critics'corner

Criminal Minds Once a cop, always a cop. And that mind-set might come in handy this week. A BAU case hits close to home for Morgan (Shemar Moore), who was a police officer before joining the team, when a serial killer specifically focuses on members of the police force in Phoenix, Ariz., in "Brothers in Arms." 10 PM on CBS, CJCH



The Santa Clause Toy company executive Scott Calvin (Tim Allen) makes a drastic career change in this heartwarming 1994 comedy. After killing the real Kriss Kringle by mistake, Scott tries on the red suit and is transformed into Santa, complete with white beard and round belly. In addition to the traditional duties, this Santa must convince his skeptical son that he's the real thing. 8 PM on CBC

Little Spirit: Christmas in New York Tired of the same old animated holiday specials? Here's something new, and it's got Danny DeVito — no, he's not Scrooge. He voices a New York caddy who tells the tale of a young newcomer to the Big Apple who gets separated from his dog. He goes looking for her accompanied by a magical imp, Little Spirit, who introduces him to all the interesting people and cultures New York at holiday time has to offer. 9 PM on NBC

Celebrity Buzz

Jessica predicts proposal near

RELATIONSHIPS Singer Jessica Simpson is reportedly convinced her boyfriend Tony Romo is going to propose.

An unidentified source tells Star magazine that Simpson "is 'convinced' that Tony plans to propose over the holidays."

The pal says Romo let the cat out of the bag by needing her about the diamond she received from ex-husband Nick Lachey.

Simpson's reps deny the story.



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Aniston: Stop the love gossip!

RELATIONSHIPS Actress Jennifer Aniston is "sick" of the interest in her relationship with John Mayer, IMDB.COM reports.

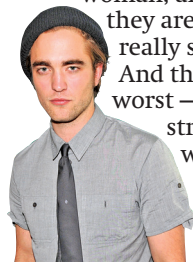
"I think it's ridiculous, the interest in my life I feel like telling people, 'You know what? It's none of your f---ing business.'"



METRO NEWS SERVICES

Pattinson likes 'crazy' women

DATING Twilight star Robert Pattinson tells Closer magazine he attracts the wrong types: "The stuff I find attractive in women, I always regret finding attractive. I always like a kind of madness in a woman, and when they are really, really strong. And they're the worst — mental, strong women!"



METRO NEWS SERVICES

Piven's Gold inspires actors

PEOPLE Jeremy Piven's character in Entourage has inspired actors to fire their real-life agents, according to the star.

Piven plays Ari Gold, a straight-talking Hollywood representative, in the hit show and the role has had a profound effect on actors who watch the series, IMDB.COM reports.



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"The best are the other actors who tell me they've fired their agent because they want a rep who's more like Ari. All you can do is try to tell them not to base real-life decisions on fictional characters," Piven tells New York Post gossip column PageSix.

But Piven is baffled by fans who confuse him with Gold and often finds himself telling them his real name.

"A lot of fans scream 'Ari!' at me. It doesn't annoy me. I go right over, tell them my real name and that I'm just the actor who plays Ari," he says.

I did 'stupid, crazy things': Williams

PEOPLE Actress Michelle Williams did "stupid, crazy things" when she was growing up as an aspiring actress, but the experiences helped her prepare for the future, IMDB.COM reports.

Williams was so eager to pursue an acting career she distanced herself from her disapproving parents when she was 15 and left school.

She shot to fame in 1998 when she appeared in the hit teen show Dawson's Creek.

Now, at 28, Williams can see she took a huge risk by branching out by herself to try to

carve a career in Hollywood.

"Hindsight. Isn't it great? The risks of going into L.A. at such an early age are huge," she tells Parade.com. "At the time, I was invincible. I thought I was on top of the world. I didn't realize what I was doing. But I wouldn't trade any of those experiences for anything in the world. I am who I am because of them. I had a lot of growing up to do and it was slammed into a couple of short years. I did stupid, crazy things. But those stupid, crazy things prepared me to deal with future."



METRO NEWS SERVICES

Mariah wants weddings yearly

MARRIAGE Singer Mariah Carey wants to have a wedding every year, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

Carey, who married Nick Cannon last April, is reportedly planning a lavish ceremony for their first anniversary, and one every year after that.

"We'll definitely get (friends and family) involved in another celebration, though. We've been talking about doing a bigger wedding on our first anniversary. And maybe another one every year," Carey says.

Only eight people attended Carey and Cannon's low-key ceremony in the Bahamas, and Carey, who was previously married to record executive Tommy Mottola, says it was perfect.

"I wanted the opposite of what I did the first time," she tells Britain's Hello! Magazine. "Nick and I wanted it to be about us, no fuss, no worrying about everyone else's opinions. I can honestly say that my wedding to Nick was the most beautiful day of my life. For once it wasn't all about the hoopla."

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GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Eloping mistake, Cruise tells Spencer and Heidi

ADVICE Actor Tom Cruise has told reality TV star Spencer Pratt that Pratt made a mistake by eloping with Heidi Montag, IMDB.COM reports.

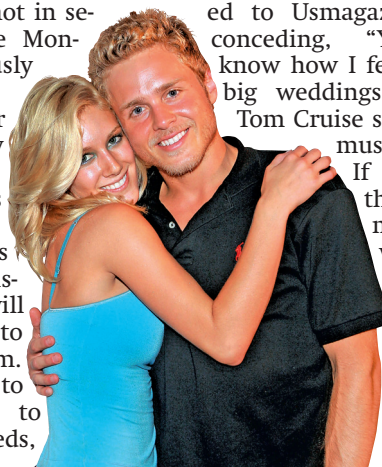
The Hills co-stars jetted off to Mexico last month to tie the knot in secret, despite Montag previously expressing her desire for a big family ceremony.

Cruise is convinced Pratt has made a mistake that will come back to haunt him. When asked to offer advice to the newlyweds,

Cruise told MTV, "If the girl wants the wedding, you gotta do the wedding. It's a special occasion, and she'll remember it forever. Spencer, dude ... you'll realize this later."

Pratt has since responded to Usmagazine.com conceding, "You all know how I feel about big weddings, but if Tom Cruise says so, it must be true. If Tom's the best man, we'll have a big wedding!"

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Tomei studied strippers for role

CAREER Oscar winner Marisa Tomei studied rocker Bret Michaels' raunchy reality show Rock Of Love as part of her stripper research for new movie The Wrestler, IMDB.COM reports.

The actress tried pole dancing, too, just to make sure she'd look authentic in her film debut as an exotic dancer.

"I would practise in a dance room with a bar and a mirror, like a ballet studio. I watched Rock Of Love, that reality show with Bret Michaels, where he's trying to get a wife and they're all strippers. That was my closest association to the actual world of it."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Swift has strict dating rules

RELATIONSHIPS Newly-single teen singer Taylor Swift has written a set of strict dating rules to ensure she attracts a better boyfriend than her ex Joe Jonas, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

"I have this rule: I don't call a guy first. And you can't ever send two text messages in a row," Swift tells TheBoot.com. "If you're like, 'I need to talk to you' all the time, (or)

'Why didn't you call me back?'... If you're that girl, then nobody's going to want to date you."

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